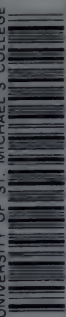


UNIVERSITY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE



3 1761 0194887 3

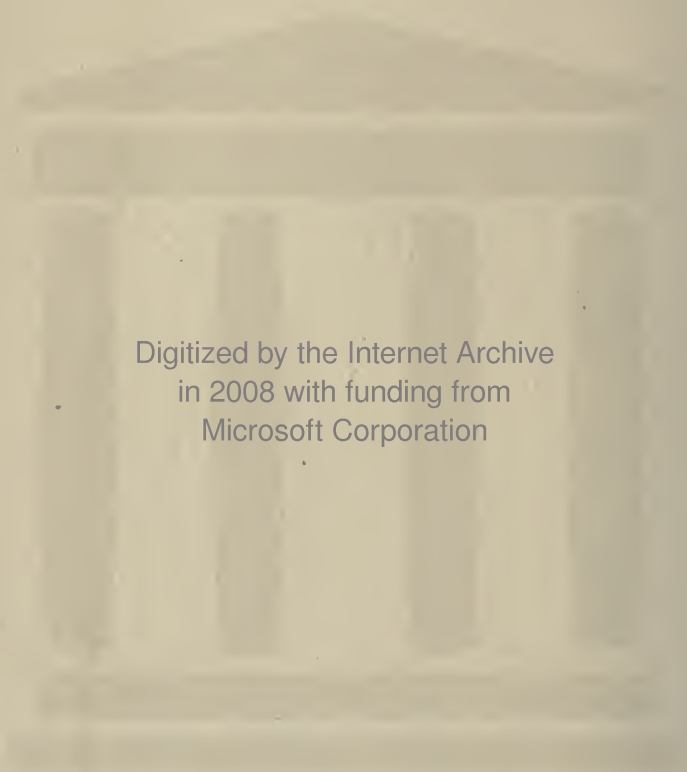
Loretta College Library

Loretto College Library

The gift of
Remhold E. Günther

Toronto

June 1918.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

THE PICCOLOMINI
THE DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN
WALLENSTEIN'S CAMP



Illustrated Sterling Edition

THE
MAID OF ORLEANS

THE BRIDE OF MESSINA
WILHELM TELL
DEMETRIUS
THE PICCOLOMINI
THE DEATH OF WALLENSTEIN
WALLENSTEIN'S CAMP

By
FRIEDRICH SCHILLER

Translated by
Sir Theodore Martin
Anna Swanwick, A. Lodge and
Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Edited by Nathan Haskell Dole

VOLUME IV



BOSTON
DANA ESTES & COMPANY
PUBLISHERS

Copyright, 1902

BY FRANCIS A. NICCOLLS & Co.

Preface

"WALLENSTEIN'S CAMP" possesses a sort of broad humour, and is not deficient in character; but to have translated it into prose, or into any other metre than that of the original, would have given a false idea both of its style and purport; to have translated it into the same metre would have been incompatible with a faithful adherence to the sense of the German from the comparative poverty of our language in rhymes; and it would have been unadvisable, from the incongruity of those lax verses with the present taste of the English public. Schiller's intention seems to have been merely to have prepared his reader for the tragedies by a lively picture of laxity of discipline and the mutinous dispositions of Wallenstein's soldiery. It is not necessary as a preliminary explanation.

The admirers of Schiller, who have abstracted their idea of that author from the "Robbers," and the "Cabal and Love," plays in which the main interest is produced by the excitement of curiosity, and in which the curiosity is excited by terrible and extraordinary incident, will not have perused without some portion of disappointment the dramas which it has been my employment to translate. They should, however, reflect that these are historical dramas taken from a popular German history; that we must, therefore, judge of them in some measure with the feelings of Germans; or, by analogy, with the interest excited in us by similar dramas in our own language. Few,

I trust, would be rash or ignorant enough to compare Schiller with Shakespeare; yet, merely as illustration, I would say that we should proceed to the perusal of "Wallenstein," not from "Lear" or "Othello," but from "Richard II.," or the three parts of "Henry VI." We scarcely expect rapidity in an historical drama; and many prolix speeches are pardoned from characters whose names and actions have formed the most amusing tales of our early life. On the other hand, there exist in these plays more individual beauties, more passages whose excellence will bear reflection than in the former productions of Schiller. The description of the Astrological Tower, and the reflections of the Young Lover, which follow it, form in the original a fine poem; and my translation must have been wretched indeed if it can have wholly overclouded the beauties of the scene in the first act of the first play between Questenberg, Max., and Octavio Piccolomini. If we except the scene of the setting sun in the "Robbers," I know of no part in Schiller's plays which equals the first scene of the fifth act of the concluding plays.¹ It would be unbecoming in me to be more diffuse on this subject. A translator stands connected with the original author by a certain law of subordination which makes it more decorous to point out excellences than defects; indeed, he is not likely to be a fair judge of either. The pleasure or disgust from his own labour will mingle with the feelings that arise from an afterview of the original. Even in the first perusal of a work in any foreign language which we understand, we are apt to attribute to it more excellence than it really possesses from our own pleasurable sense of difficulty overcome without effort. Translation of poetry into poetry is difficult, because the translator must give a brilliancy to his language without that warmth of original conception

¹ In this edition, scene iii., act. v.

from which such brilliancy would follow of its own accord. But the translator of a living author is encumbered with additional inconveniences. If he render his original faithfully as to the sense of each passage, he must necessarily destroy a considerable portion of the spirit; if he endeavour to give a work executed according to laws of compensation he subjects himself to imputations of vanity or misrepresentation. I have thought it my duty to remain bound by the sense of my original with as few exceptions as the nature of the languages rendered possible.

SAMUEL TAYLOR COLERIDGE.

List of Illustrations

THE PICCOLOMINI

	PAGE
THE GENERALS OF WALLENSTEIN BEFORE THE BAN- QUET	<i>Frontispiece</i>
" I DEDICATE YOUR SOULS TO VENGEANCE " . . .	283

THE MAID OF ORLEANS

THE CORONATION AT RHEIMS	102
" I SWUNG MYSELF UPON THE FLATTENED SHELF " . .	323

THE PICCOLOMINI

The Piccolomini

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WALLENSTEIN, Duke of Friedland, Generalissimo of the Imperial Forces in the Thirty Years' War.

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, Lieutenant-General.

MAX. PICCOLOMINI, his Son, Colonel of a Regiment of Cuirassiers.

COUNT TERZKY, the Commander of several Regiments, and Brother-in-law of Wallenstein.

ILLO, Field-Marshal, Wallenstein's Confidant.

ISOLANI, General of the Croats.

BUTLER, an Irishman, Commander of a Regiment of Dragoons.

TIEFENBACH,	} Generals under Wallenstein.
DON MARADAS,	
GOETZ,	
KOLATTO,	

NEUMANN, Captain of Cavalry, Aid-de-Camp to Terzky.

VON QUESTENBERG, the War Commissioner, Imperial Envoy.

BAPTISTA SENI, an Astrologer.

DUCHESS OF FRIEDLAND, Wife of Wallenstein.

THEKLA, her Daughter, Princess of Friedland.

THE COUNTESS TERZKY, Sister of the Duchess.

A CORNET.

COLONELS and GENERALS (several).

PAGES and ATTENDANTS belonging to Wallenstein.

ATTENDANTS and HOBBOISTS belonging to Terzky.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR to Count Terzky.

VALET DE CHAMBRE of Count Piccolomini.

The Piccolomini

ACT I.

SCENE I.

*An old Gothic Chamber in the Council-house at Pilsen,
decorated with Colours and other War Insignia.*

ILLO, *with* BUTLER *and* ISOLANI.

ILLO.

Ye have come too late — but ye are come! The distance,
Count Isolani, excuses your delay.

ISOLANI.

Add this too, that we come not empty-handed.
At Donauwerth¹ it was reported to us,
A Swedish caravan was on its way,
Transporting a rich cargo of provision,
Almost six hundred wagons. This my Croats
Plunged down upon and seized, this weighty prize! —
We bring it hither —

¹ A town about twelve German miles northeast of Ulm.

ILLO.

Just in time to banquet
The illustrious company assembled here.

BUTLER.

'Tis all alive! a stirring scene here!

ISOLANI.

Ay!

The very churches are full of soldiers.

[*Casts his eye round.*]

And in the council-house, too, I observe,
You're settled quite at home! Well, well! we soldiers
Must shift and suit us in what way we can.

ILLO.

We have the colonels here of thirty regiments.
You'll find Count Terzky here, and Tiefenbach,
Kolatto, Goetz, Maradas, Hinnnersam,
The Piccolomini, both son and father —
You'll meet with many an unexpected greeting
From many an old friend and acquaintance. Only
Gallas is wanting still, and Altringer.

BUTLER.

Expect not Gallas.

ILLO (*hesitating*).

How so? Do *you* know —

ISOLANI (*interrupting him*).

Max. Piccolomini here? O bring me to him.
I see him yet ('tis now ten years ago,
We were engaged with Mansfeldt hard by Dessau),
I see the youth, in my mind's eye I see him,

Leap his black war-horse from the bridge adown,
 And t'ward his father, then in extreme peril,
 Beat up against the strong tide of the Elbe.
 The down was scarce upon his chin! I hear
 He has made good the promise of his youth,
 And the full hero now is finished in him.

ILLO.

You'll see him yet ere evening. He conducts
 The Duchess Friedland hither, and the princess¹
 From Cärnthen.² We expect them here at noon.

BUTLER.

Both wife and daughter does the duke call hither?
 He crowds in visitants from all sides.

ISOLANI.

Hm!

So much the better! I had framed my mind
 To hear of naught but warlike circumstance,
 Of marches and attacks, and batteries;
 And lo! the duke provides, and something too
 Of gentler sort and lovely, should be present
 To feast our eyes.

ILLO (*who has been standing in the attitude of meditation, to BUTLER, whom he leads a little on one side*).

And how came you to know
 That the Count Gallas joins us not?

BUTLER.

Because

He importuned *me* to remain behind.

¹The dukes in Germany being always reigning powers, their sons and daughters are entitled princes and princesses.

²Carinthia.

ILLO (*with warmth*).

And you? You hold out firmly!

[*Grasping his hand with affection.*

Noble Butler!

BUTLER.

After the obligation which the duke
Had laid so newly on me —

ILLO.

I had forgotten

A pleasant duty — major-general,

I wish you joy!

ISOLANI.

What, you mean, of this regiment?

I hear, too, that to make the gift still sweeter,
The duke has given him the very same
In which he first saw service, and since then
Worked himself step by step, through each preferment,
From the ranks upwards. And verily, it gives
A precedent of hope, a spur of action
To the whole corps, if once in their remembrance
An old deserving soldier makes his way.

BUTLER.

I am perplexed and doubtful whether or no
I dare accept this your congratulation.
The emperor has not yet confirmed the appointment.

ISOLANI.

Seize it, friend, seize it! The hand which in that post
Placed you is strong enough to keep you there,
Spite of the emperor and his ministers!

ILLO.

Ay, if we would but so consider it! —
If we would *all* of us consider it so!
The emperor gives us nothing; from the duke
Comes all — whate'er we hope, whate'er we have.

ISOLANI (*to* ILLO).

My noble brother! did I tell you how
The duke will satisfy my creditors?
Will be himself my bankers for the future,
Make me once more a creditable man!
And this is now the third time, think of that!
This kingly-minded man has rescued me
From absolute ruin and restored my honour.

ILLO.

Oh that his power but kept pace with his wishes!
Why, friend! he'd give the whole world to his soldiers.
But at Vienna, brother! — here's the grievance, —
What politic schemes do they not lay to shorten
His arm, and where they can to clip his pinions.
Then these new dainty requisitions! these
Which this same Questenberg brings hither!

BUTLER.

Ay!

Those requisitions of the emperor —
I too have heard about them; but I hope
The duke will not draw back a single inch!

ILLO.

Not from his right most surely, unless first
From office!

BUTLER (*shocked and confused*).

Know you *ought* then? You alarm me.

ISOLANI (*at the same time with BUTLER, and in a hurrying voice*).

We should be ruined, every one of us!

ILLO.

Yonder I see *our worthy friend*¹ approaching
With the Lieutenant-General Piccolomini.

BUTLER (*shaking his head significantly*).

I fear we shall not go hence as we came.

SCENE II.

Enter OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI and QUESTENBERG.

OCTAVIO (*still in the distance*).

Ay! ah! more still! Still more new visitors!
Acknowledge, friend! that never was a camp,
Which held at once so many heads of heroes.

QUESTENBERG.

Let none approach a camp of Friedland's troops
Who dares to think unworthily of war;
E'en I myself had nigh forgot its evils
When I surveyed that lofty soul of order,
By which, while it destroys the world — itself
Maintains the greatness which itself created.

¹ Spoken with a sneer.

OCTAVIO (*approaching nearer*).

Welcome, Count Isolani!

ISOLANI.

My noble brother!

Even now am I arrived; it has been else my duty —

OCTAVIO.

And Colonel Butler — trust me, I rejoice
Thus to renew acquaintance with a man
Whose worth and services I know and honour.
See, see, my friend!

There might we place at once before our eyes
The sum of war's whole trade and mystery —

[*To QUESTENBERG, presenting BUTLER and
ISOLANI at the same time to him.*

These two the total sum — strength and despatch.

QUESTENBERG (*to OCTAVIO*).

And lo! betwixt them both, experienced prudence!

OCTAVIO (*presenting QUESTENBERG to BUTLER and
ISOLANI*).

The Chamberlain and War-Commissioner Questenberg.
The bearer of the emperor's behests,
The long-tried friend and patron of all soldiers,
We honour in this noble visitor. [*Universal silence.*

ILLO (*moving toward QUESTENBERG*).

'Tis not the first time, noble minister,
You have shown our camp this honour.

QUESTENBERG.

Once before

I stood beside these colours.

ILLO.

Perchance too you remember *where* that was;
 It was at Znäim¹ in Moravia, where
 You did present yourself upon the part
 Of the emperor to supplicate our duke
 That he would straight assume the chief command.

QUESTENBERG.

To *supplicate*? Nay, bold general!
 So far extended neither my commission
 (At least to my own knowledge) nor my zeal.

ILLO.

Well, well, then — to *compel* him, if you choose.
 I can remember me right well, Count Tilly
 Had suffered total rout upon the Lech.
 Bavaria lay all open to the enemy,
 Whom there was nothing to delay from pressing
 Onwards into the very heart of Austria.
 At that time you and Werdenberg appeared
 Before our general, storming him with prayers,
 And menacing the emperor's displeasure,
 Unless he took compassion on this wretchedness.

ISOLANI (*steps up to them*).

Yes, yes, 'tis comprehensible enough,
 Wherefore with your commission of to-day,
 You were not all too willing to remember
 Your former one.

QUESTENBERG.

Why not, Count Isolani?
 No contradiction sure exists between them.
 It was the urgent business of that time

¹A town not far from the Mine-mountains, on the highroad from Vienna to Prague.

To snatch Bavaria from her enemy's hand ;
And my commission of to-day instructs me
To free her from her good friends and protectors.

ILLO.

A worthy office ! After with our blood
We have wrested this Bohemia from the Saxon,
To be swept out of it is all our thanks,
The sole reward of all our hard-won victories.

QUESTENBERG.

Unless that wretched land be doomed to suffer
Only a change of evils, it must be
Freed from the scourge alike of friend or foe.

ILLO.

What ? 'Twas a favourable year ; the boors
Can answer fresh demands already.

QUESTENBERG.

Nay,

If you discourse of herds and meadow-grounds —

ISOLANI.

The war maintains the war. Are the boors ruined
The emperor gains so many more new soldiers.

QUESTENBERG.

And is the poorer by even so many subjects.

ISOLANI.

Poh ! we are all his subjects.

QUESTENBERG.

Yet with a difference, general! The one fill
 With profitable industry the purse,
 The others are well skilled to empty it.
 The sword has made the emperor poor; the plough
 Must reinvigorate his resources.

ISOLANI.

Sure!

Times are not yet so bad. Methinks I see
 [*Examining with his eye the dress and ornaments*
 of QUESTENBERG.

Good store of gold that still remains uncoined.

QUESTENBERG.

Thank Heaven! that means have been found out to hide
 Some little from the fingers of the Croats.

ILLO.

There! The Stawata and the Martinitz,
 On whom the emperor heaps his gifts and graces,
 To the heart-burning of all good Bohemians —
 Those minions of court favour, those court harpies,
 Who fatten on the wrecks of citizens
 Driven from their house and home — who reap no
 harvests
 Save in the general calamity —
 Who now, with kingly pomp, insult and mock
 The desolation of their country — these,
 Let these, and such as these, support the war,
 The fatal war, which they alone enkindled!

BUTLER.

And those state-parasites, who have their feet
 So constantly beneath the emperor's table,

Who cannot let a benefice fall, but they
Snap at it with dogs' hunger — they, forsooth,
Would pare the soldier's bread and cross his reckoning!

ISOLANI.

My life long will it anger me to think,
How when I went to court seven years ago,
To see about new horses for our regiment,
How from one antechamber to another
They dragged me on and left me by the hour
To kick my heels among a crowd of simpering
Feast-fattened slaves, as if I had come thither
A mendicant suitor for the crumbs of favour
That fell beneath their tables. And, at last,
Whom should they send me but a Capuchin!
Straight I began to muster up my sins
For absolution — but no such luck for me!
This was the man, this Capuchin, with whom
I was to treat concerning the army horses!
And I was forced at last to quit the field,
The business unaccomplished. Afterward
The duke procured me in three days what I
Could not obtain in thirty at Vienna.

QUESTENBERG.

Yes, yes! your travelling bills soon found their way to
us!
Too well I know we have still accounts to settle.

ILLO.

War is violent trade; one cannot always
Finish one's work by soft means; every trifle
Must not be blackened into sacrilege.
If we should wait till you, in solemn council,
With due deliberation had selected

The smallest out of four and twenty evils,
I' faith we should wait long —
"Dash! and through with it!" That's the better
watchword.

Then after come what may come. 'Tis' man's nature
To make the best of a bad thing once past.
A bitter and perplexed "what shall I do?"
Is worse to man than worst necessity.

QUESTENBERG.

Ay, doubtless, it is true; the duke *does* spare us
The troublesome task of choosing.

BUTLER.

Yes, the duke
Cares with a father's feelings for his troops;
But how the emperor feels for us, we see.

QUESTENBERG.

His cares and feelings all ranks share alike,
Nor will he offer one up to another.

ISOLANI.

And therefore thrusts he us into the deserts
As beasts of prey, that so he may preserve
His dear sheep fattening in his fields at home.

QUESTENBERG (*with a sneer*).

Count! this comparison you make, not I.

ILLO.

Why, were we all the court supposes us
'Twere dangerous, sure, to give us liberty.

QUESTENBERG (*gravely*).

You have taken liberty — it was not given you,
And therefore it becomes an urgent duty
To rein it in with the curbs.

ILLO.

Expect to find a restive steed in us.

QUESTENBERG.

A better rider may be found to rule it.

ILLO.

He only brooks the rider who has tamed him.

QUESTENBERG.

Ay, tame him once, and then a child may lead him.

ILLO.

The child, we know, is found for him already.

QUESTENBERG.

Be duty, sir, your study, not a name.

BUTLER (*who has stood aside with PICCOLOMINI, but
with visible interest in the conversation, advances*).

Sir president, the emperor has in Germany
A splendid host assembled; in this kingdom
Full twenty thousand soldiers are cantoned,
With sixteen thousand in Silesia;
Ten regiments are posted on the Weser,
The Rhine, and Main; in Swabia there are six,
And in Bavaria twelve, to face the Swedes;
Without including in the account the garrisons
Who on the frontiers hold the fortresses.

This vast and mighty host is all obedient
To Friedland's captains; and its brave commanders,
Bred in one school, and nurtured with one milk,
Are all excited by one heart and soul;
They are as strangers on the soil they tread,
The service is their only house and home.
No zeal inspires them for their country's cause,
For thousands like myself were born abroad;
Nor care they for the emperor, for one-half
Deserting other service fled to ours,
Indifferent what their banner, whether 'twere
The Double Eagle, Lily, or the Lion.
Yet one sole man can rein this fiery host
By equal rule, by equal love and fear;
Blending the many-nationed whole in one;
And like the lightning's fires securely led
Down the conducting rod, e'en thus his power
Rules all the mass, from guarded post to post,
From where the sentry hears the Baltic roar,
Or views the fertile vales of the Adige,
E'en to the body-guard, who holds his watch
Within the precincts of the imperial palace!

QUESTENBERG.

What's the short meaning of this long harangue?

BUTLER.

That the respect, the love, the confidence,
Which makes us willing subjects of Duke Friedland,
Are not to be transferred to the first comer
That Austria's court may please to send to us.
We have not yet so readily forgotten
How the command came into Friedland's hands.
Was it, forsooth, the emperor's majesty
That gave the army ready to his hand,
And only sought a leader for it? No.

The army then had no existence. He,
 Friedland, it was who called it into being,
 And gave it to his sovereign — but receiving
 No army at his hand; nor did the emperor
 Give Wallenstein to us as general. No,
 It was from Wallenstein we first received
 The emperor as our master and our sovereign
 And he, he only, binds us to our banners!

OCTAVIO (*interposing and addressing* QUESTENBERG).

My noble friend,

This is no more than a remembrancing
 That you are now in camp, and among warriors!
 The soldier's boldness constitutes his freedom.
 Could he act daringly, unless he dared
 Talk even so? One runs into the other.
 The boldness of this worthy officer,

[*Pointing to* BUTLER.

Which now is but mistaken in its mark,
 Preserved, when naught but boldness could preserve it,
 To the emperor, his capital city, Prague,
 In a most formidable mutiny
 Of the whole garrison. [*Military music at a distance.*

Hah! here they come!

ILLO.

The sentries are saluting them: this signal
 Announces the arrival of the duchess.

OCTAVIO (*to* QUESTENBERG).

Then my son Max., too, has returned. 'Twas he
 Fetched and attended them from Cärnthen hither.

ISOLANI (*to* ILLO).

Shall we not go in company to greet them?

ILLO.

Well, let us go — Ho! Colonel Butler, come.

[*To* OCTAVIO.

You'll not forget that yet ere noon we meet
The noble envoy at the general's palace.

[*Exeunt all but* QUESTENBERG *and* OCTAVIO.

SCENE III.

QUESTENBERG *and* OCTAVIO.

QUESTENBERG (*with signs of aversion and astonishment*).

What have I not been forced to hear, Octavio!
What sentiments! what fierce, uncurbed defiance!
And were this spirit universal —

OCTAVIO.

Hm!

You are now acquainted with three-fourths of the army.

QUESTENBERG.

Where must we seek, then, for a second host
To have the custody of this? That Illo
Thinks worse, I fear me, than he speaks. And then
This Butler, too — he cannot even conceal
The passionate workings of his ill intentions.

OCTAVIO.

Quickness of temper — irritated pride;
'Twas nothing more. I cannot give up Butler.
I know a spell that will soon dispossess
The evil spirit in *him*.

QUESTENBERG (*walking up and down in evident disquiet*).

Friend, friend !

O ! this is worse, far worse, than we had suffered
Ourselves to dream of at Vienna. There
We saw it only with a courtier's eyes,
Eyes dazzled by the splendour of the throne.
We had not seen the war-chief, the commander,
The man all-powerful in his camp. Here, here,
'Tis quite another thing.
Here is no emperor more — the duke is emperor.
Alas, my friend ! alas, my noble friend !
This walk which you have ta'en me through the camp
Strikes my hopes prostrate.

OCTAVIO.

Now you see yourself

Of what a perilous kind the office is,
Which you deliver to me from the court.
The least suspicion of the general
Costs me my freedom and my life, and would
But hasten his most desperate enterprise.

QUESTENBERG.

Where was our reason sleeping when we trusted
This madman with the sword, and placed such power
In such a hand ? I tell you, he'll refuse,
Flatly refuse to obey the imperial orders.
Friend, he *can* do it, and what he can, he will.
And then the impunity of his defiance —
Oh ! what a proclamation of our weakness !

OCTAVIO.

D'ye think, too, he has brought his wife and daughter
Without a purpose hither ? Here in camp !
And at the very point of time in which

We're arming for the war? That he has taken
These, the last pledges of his loyalty,
Away from out the emperor's dominions —
This is no doubtful token of the nearness
Of some eruption.

QUESTENBERG.

How shall we hold footing
Beneath this tempest, which collects itself
And threatens us from all quarters? The enemy
Of the empire on our borders, now already
The master of the Danube, and still farther,
And farther still, extending every hour!
In our interior the alarum-bells
Of insurrection — peasantry in arms —
All orders discontented — and the army,
Just in the moment of our expectation
Of aidance from it — lo! this very army
Seduced, run wild, lost to all discipline,
Loosened, and rent asunder from the state
And from their sovereign, the blind instrument
Of the most daring of mankind, a weapon
Of fearful power, which at his will *he* wields.

OCTAVIO.

Nay, nay, friend! let us not despair too soon —
Men's words are even bolder than their deeds;
And many a resolute, who now appears
Made up to all extremes, will, on a sudden,
Find in his breast a heart he wot not of,
Let but a single honest man speak out
The true name of his crime! Remember, too,
We stand not yet so wholly unprotected.
Counts Altringer and Gallas have maintained
Their little army faithful to its duty,
And daily it becomes more numerous.

Nor can he take us by surprise ; you know
I hold him all encompassed by my listeners.
Whate'er he does is mine, even while 'tis doing —
No step so small, but instantly I hear it ;
Yea, his own mouth discloses it.

QUESTENBERG.

'Tis quite
Incomprehensible, that he detects not
The foe so near !

OCTAVIO.

Beware, you do not think,
That I, by lying arts, and complaisant
Hypocrisy, have sulked into his graces,
Or with the substance of smooth professions
Nourish his all-confiding friendship ! No —
Compelled alike by prudence, and that duty
Which we all owe our country and our sovereign,
To hide my genuine feelings from him, yet
Ne'er have I duped him with base counterfeits !

QUESTENBERG.

It is the visible ordinance of heaven.

OCTAVIO.

I know not what it is that so attracts
And links him both to me and to my son.
Comrades and friends we always were — long habit,
Adventurous deeds performed in company,
And all those many and various incidents
Which stores a soldier's memory with affections,
Had bound us long and early to each other —
Yet I can name the day, when all at once
His heart rose on me, and his confidence
Shot out into sudden growth. It was the morning

Before the memorable fight at Lützen.
 Urged by an ugly dream, I sought him out,
 To press him to accept another charger.
 At a distance from the tents, beneath a tree,
 I found him in a sleep. When I had waked him
 And had related all my bodings to him,
 Long time he stared upon me, like a man
 Astounded : thereon fell upon my neck,
 And manifested to me an emotion
 That far outstripped the worth of that small service.
 Since then his confidence has followed me
 With the same pace that mine has fled from him.

QUESTENBERG.

You lead your son into the secret ?

OCTAVIO.

No !

QUESTENBERG.

What ! and not warn him either, what bad hands
 His lot has placed him in ?

OCTAVIO.

I must perforce
 Leave him in wardship to his innocence.
 His young and open soul — dissimulation
 Is foreign to its habits ! Ignorance
 Alone can keep alive the cheerful air,
 The unembarrassed sense and light free spirit,
 That makes the duke secure.

QUESTENBERG (*anxiously*).

My honoured friend ! most highly do I deem
 Of Colonel Piccolomini — yet — if —
 Reflect a little —

OCTAVIO.

I must venture it.

Hush! There he comes!

SCENE IV.

MAX. PICCOLOMINI, OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, QUESTENBERG.

MAX.

Ha! there he is himself. Welcome, my father!

[He embraces his father. As he turns around, he observes QUESTENBERG, and draws back with a cold and reserved air.]

You are engaged, I see. I'll not disturb you.

OCTAVIO.

How, Max.? Look closer at this visitor.

Attention, Max., an old friend merits — reverence
Belongs of right to the envoy of your sovereign.

MAX. (*drily*).

Von Questenberg! — welcome — if you bring with you
Aught good to our headquarters.

QUESTENBERG (*seizing his hand*).

Nay, draw not

Your hand away, Count Piccolomini!

Not on my own account alone I seized it,
And nothing common will I say therewith.

[Taking the hands of both.]

Octavio — Max. Piccolomini!

O saviour names, and full of happy omen!

Ne'er will her prosperous genius turn from Austria,

While two such stars, with blessed influences
Beaming protection, shine above her hosts.

MAX.

Heh! Noble minister! You miss your part.
You come not here to act a panegyric.
You're sent, I know, to find fault and to scold us —
I must not be beforehand with my comrades.

OCTAVIO *to* MAX.

He comes from court, where people are not quite
So well contented with the duke as here.

MAX.

What now have they contrived to find out in him?
That he alone determines for himself
What he himself alone doth understand!
Well, therein he does right, and will persist in't.
Heaven never meant him for that passive thing
That can be struck and hammered out to suit
Another's taste and fancy. He'll not dance
To every tune of every minister.
It goes against his nature — he can't do it,
He is possessed by a commanding spirit,
And his, too, is the station of command.
And well for us it is so! There exist
Few fit to rule themselves, but few that use
Their intellects intelligently. Then
Well for the whole, if there be found a man
Who makes himself what nature destined him,
The pause, the central point, to thousand thousands —
Stands fixed and stately, like a firm-built column,
Where all may press with joy and confidence —
Now such a man is Wallenstein; and if
Another better suits the court — no other
But such a one as he can serve the army.

QUESTENBERG.

The army ? Doubtless !

MAX.

What delight to observe
How he incites and strengthens all around him,
Infusing life and vigour. Every power
Seems as it were redoubled by his presence :
He draws forth every latent energy,
Showing to each his own peculiar talent,
Yet leaving all to be what nature made them,
And watching only that they be naught else
In the right place and time ; and he has skill
To mould the powers of all to his own end.

QUESTENBERG.

But who denies his knowledge of mankind,
And skill to use it ? Our complaint is this : —
That in the master he forgets the servant,
As if he claimed by birth his present honours.

MAX.

And does he not so ? Is he not endowed
With every gift and power to carry out
The high intents of nature, and to win
A ruler's station by a ruler's talent ?

QUESTENBERG.

So then it seems to rest with him alone
What is the worth of all mankind beside !

MAX.

Uncommon men require no common trust ;
Give him but scope and he will set the bounds.

QUESTENBERG.

The proof is yet to come.

MAX.

Thus are ye ever.
Ye shrink from everything of depth, and think
Yourselves are only safe while ye're in shallows.

OCTAVIO (*to QUESTENBERG*).

'Twere best to yield with a good grace, my friend;
Of *him* there you'll make nothing.

MAX. (*continuing*).

In their fear

They call a spirit up, and when he comes,
Straight their flesh creeps and quivers, and they dread
him
More than the ills for which they called him up.
The uncommon, the sublime, must seem and be
Like things of every day. But in the field,
Ay, *there* the *Present Being* makes itself felt.
The personal must command, the actual eye
Examine. If to be the chieftain asks
All that is great in nature, let it be
Likewise his privilege to move and act
In all the correspondences of greatness.
The oracle within him, that which lives,
He must invoke and question — not dead books,
Not ordinances, not mould-rotted papers.

OCTAVIO.

My son! of those old narrow ordinances
Let us not hold too lightly. They are weights
Of priceless value, which oppressed mankind
Tied to the volatile will of their oppressors.

For always formidable was the League
And partnership of free power with free will.
The way of ancient ordinance, though it winds,
Is yet no devious path. Straight forward goes
The lightning's path, and straight the fearful path
Of the cannon-ball. Direct it flies, and rapid;
Shattering that it may reach, and shattering what it
reaches.

My son, the road the human being travels,
That on which blessing comes and goes, doth follow
The river's course, the valley's playful windings,
Curves round the cornfield and the hill of vines,
Honouring the holy bounds of property!
And thus secure, though late, leads to its end.

QUESTENBERG.

Oh, hear your father, noble youth! hear him
Who is at once the hero and the man.

OCTAVIO.

My son, the nursling of the camp spoke in thee!
A war of fifteen years
Hath been thy education and thy school.
Peace hast thou never witnessed! There exists
An higher than the warrior's excellence.
In war itself war is no ultimate purpose;
The vast and sudden deeds of violence,
Adventures wild, and wonders of the moment,
These are not they, my son, that generate
The calm, the blissful, and the enduring mighty!
Lo there! the soldier, rapid architect!
Builds his light town of canvas, and at once
The whole scene moves and bustles momentarily.
With arms, and neighing steeds, and mirth and quarrel
The motley market fills; the roads, the streams,
Are crowded with new freights; trade stirs and hurries,

But on some morrow morn, all suddenly,
 The tents drop down, the horde renews its march.
 Dreary, and solitary as a churchyard,
 The meadow and down-trodden seed-plot lie,
 And the year's harvest is gone utterly.

MAX.

Oh, let the emperor make peace, my father !
 Most gladly would I give the blood-stained laurel
 For the first violet¹ of the leafless spring,
 Plucked in those quiet fields where I have journeyed.

OCTAVIO.

What ails thee ? What so moves thee all at once ?

MAX.

Peace have I ne'er beheld ? I have beheld it.
 From thence am I come hither : oh, that sight,
 It glimmers still before me, like some landscape
 Left in the distance, — some delicious landscape !
 My road conducted me through countries where
 The war has not yet reached. Life, life, my father
 My venerable father, life has charms
 Which we have never experienced. We have been
 But voyaging along its barren coasts,
 Like some poor ever-roaming horde of pirates,
 That, crowded in the rank and narrow ship,
 House on the wild sea with wild usages,
 Nor know aught of the mainland, but the bays
 Where safest they may venture a thieves' landing.
 Whate'er in the inland dales the land conceals

¹ In the original, —

“ Den blut'gen Lorbeer geb' ich hin mit Freuden,
 Fürs erste Veilchen, das der März uns bringt,
 Das dürftige Pfand der neuverjüngten Erde.”

Of fair and exquisite, oh, nothing, nothing,
Do we behold of that in our rude voyage.

OCTAVIO (*attentive, with an appearance of uneasiness*).

And so your journey has revealed this to you ?

MAX.

'Twas the first leisure of my life. O tell me,
What is the meed and purpose of the toil,
The painful toil which robbed me of my youth,
Left me a heart unsouled and solitary,
A spirit uninformed, unornamented !
For the camp's stir, and crowd, and ceaseless larum,
The neighing war-horse, the air-shattering trumpet,
The unvaried, still returning hour of duty,
Word of command, and exercise of arms —
There's nothing here, there's nothing in all this,
To satisfy the heart, the gasping heart !
Mere bustling nothingness, where the soul is not —
This cannot be the sole felicity,
These cannot be man's best and only pleasures

OCTAVIO.

Much hast thou learnt, my son, in this short journey.

MAX.

Oh day, thrice lovely ! when at length the soldier
Returns home into life ; when he becomes
A fellow man among his fellow men.
The colours are unfurled, the cavalcade
Marshals, and now the buzz is hushed, and hark !
Now the soft peace-march beats, home, brothers, home !
The caps and helmet are all garlanded
With green boughs, the last plundering of the fields.
The city gates fly open of themselves,
They need no longer the petard to tear them.

The ramparts are all filled with men and women,
 With peaceful men and women, that send onwards
 Kisses and welcomings upon the air,
 Which they make breezy with affectionate gestures.
 From all the towers rings out the merry peal,
 The joyous vespers of a bloody day.
 O happy man, O fortunate ! for whom
 The well-known door, the faithful arms are open,
 The faithful tender arms with mute embracing.

QUESTENBERG (*apparently much affected*).

O that you should speak
 Of such a distant, distant time, and not
 Of the to-morrow, not of this to-day.

MAX. (*turning round to him quick and vehement*).

Where lies the fault but on you in Vienna !
 I will deal openly with you, Questenberg.
 Just now, as first I saw you standing here
 (I'll own it to you freely), indignation
 Crowded and pressed my inmost soul together.
 'Tis ye that hinder peace, *ye !* — and the warrior,
 It is the warrior that must force it from you.
 Ye fret the general's life out, blacken him,
 Hold him up as a rebel, and heaven knows
 What else still worse, because he spares the Saxons,
 And tries to awaken confidence in the enemy ;
 Which yet's the only way to peace : for if
 War intermit not during war, *how* then
 And *whence* can peace come ? Your own plagues fall
 on you !
 Even as I love what's virtuous, hate I you.
 And here I make this vow, here pledge myself,
 My blood shall spurt out for this Wallenstein,
 And my heart drain off, drop by drop, ere ye
 Shall revel and dance jubilee o'er his ruin. [Exit.

SCENE V.

QUESTENBERG, OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI.

QUESTENBERG.

Alas ! alas ! and stands it so ?

[Then in pressing and impatient tones.

What, friend ! and do we let him go away

In this delusion — let him go away ?

Not call him back immediately, not open

His eyes upon the spot ?

OCTAVIO *(recovering himself out of a deep study).*

He has now opened mine,

And I see more than pleases me.

QUESTENBERG.

What is it ?

OCTAVIO.

Curse on this journey !

QUESTENBERG.

But why so ? What is it ?

OCTAVIO.

Come, come along, friend ! I must follow up

The ominous track immediately. Mine eyes

Are opened now, and I must use them. Come !

[Draws QUESTENBERG on with him.

QUESTENBERG.

What now ? *Where* go you then ?

OCTAVIO.

To her herself.

QUESTENBERG.

To —

OCTAVIO (*interrupting him and correcting himself*).

To the duke. Come, let us go — 'Tis done, 'tis done,

I see the net that is thrown over him.

Oh! he returns not to me as he went.

QUESTENBERG.

Nay, but explain yourself.

OCTAVIO.

And that I should not
Foresee it, not prevent this journey! Wherefore
Did I keep it from him? You were in the right.
I should have warned him. Now it is too late.

QUESTENBERG.

But *what's* too late? Bethink yourself, my friend,
That you are talking absolute riddles to me.

OCTAVIO (*more collected*).

Come! to the duke's. 'Tis close upon the hour
Which he appointed you for audience. Come!
A curse, a threefold curse, upon this journey!

[*He leads QUESTENBERG off.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Changes to a spacious chamber in the house of the Duke of Friedland. Servants employed in putting the tables and chairs in order. During this enters SENI, like an old Italian doctor, in black, and clothed somewhat fantastically. He carries a white staff, with which he marks out the quarters of the heavens.

FIRST SERVANT.

Come—to it, lads, to it! Make an end of it. I hear the sentry call out, “Stand to your arms!” They will be here in a minute.

SECOND SERVANT.

Why were we not told before that the audience would be held here? Nothing prepared—no orders—no instructions.

THIRD SERVANT.

Ay, and why was the balcony chamber countermanded, that with the great worked carpet? There one can look about one.

FIRST SERVANT.

Nay, that you must ask the mathematician there. He says it is an unlucky chamber.

SECOND SERVANT.

Poh! stuff and nonsense! that’s what I call a *hum*. A chamber is a chamber; what much can the place signify in the affair?

SENI (*with gravity*).

My son, there's *nothing* insignificant,
Nothing! But yet in every earthly thing,
First and most principal is place and time.

FIRST SERVANT (*to the second*).

Say nothing to him, Nat. The duke himself must
let him have his own will.

SENI (*counts the chairs, half in a loud, half in a low
voice, till he comes to eleven, which he repeats*).

Eleven! an evil number! Set twelve chairs.
Twelve! twelve signs hath the zodiac: five and seven,
The holy numbers, include themselves in twelve.

SECOND SERVANT.

And what may you have to object against eleven?
I should like to know that now.

SENI.

Eleven is transgression; eleven oversteps
The ten commandments.

SECOND SERVANT.

That's good? and why do you call five a holy
number?

SENI.

Five is the soul of man: for even as man
Is mingled up of good and evil, so
The five is the first number that's made up
Of even and odd.

SECOND SERVANT.

The foolish old coxcomb!

FIRST SERVANT.

Ay, let him alone though. I like to hear him; there is more in his words than can be seen at first sight.

THIRD SERVANT.

Off, they come.

SECOND SERVANT.

There! Out at the side-door.

[They hurry off. SENI follows slowly. A page brings the staff of command on a red cushion, and places it on the table, near the duke's chair. They are announced from without, and the wings of the door fly open.]

SCENE II.

WALLENSTEIN, DUCHESS.

WALLENSTEIN.

You went, then, through Vienna, were presented
To the Queen of Hungary?

DUCHESS.

Yes; and to the empress, too,
And by both majesties were we admitted
To kiss the hand.

WALLENSTEIN.

And how was it received,
That I had sent for wife and daughter hither
To the camp, in winter-time?

DUCHESS.

I did even that
Which you commissioned me to do. I told them

You had determined on our daughter's marriage,
And wished, ere you went into the field,
To show the elected husband his betrothed.

WALLENSTEIN.

And did they guess the choice which I had made?

DUCHESS.

They only hoped and wished it may have fallen
Upon no foreign nor yet Lutheran noble.

WALLENSTEIN.

And you — what do *you* wish, Elizabeth?

DUCHESS.

Your will, you know, was always mine.

WALLENSTEIN (*after a pause*).

Well, then, —

And in all else, of what kind and complexion
Was your reception at the court?

[*The DUCHESS casts her eyes on the ground, and
remains silent.*]

Hide nothing from me. How were you received?

DUCHESS.

O! my dear lord, all is not what it was.
A canker-worm, my lord, a canker-worm
Has stolen into the bud.

WALLENSTEIN.

Ay! is it so?

What, they were lax? they failed of the old respect?

DUCHESS.

Not of respect. No honours were omitted,
No outward courtesy ; but in the place
Of condescending, confidential kindness,
Familiar and endearing, there were given me
Only these honours and that solemn courtesy.
Ah ! and the tenderness which was put on,
It was the guise of pity, not of favour.
No ! Albrecht's wife, Duke Albrecht's princely wife,
Count Harrach's noble daughter, should not so —
Not wholly so should she have been received.

WALLENSTEIN.

Yes, yes ; they have taken offence. My latest conduct
They railed at it, no doubt.

DUCHESS.

O that they had !
I have been long accustomed to defend you,
To heal and pacify distempered spirits.
No ; no one railed at you. They wrapped them up,
O Heaven ! in such oppressive, solemn silence !
Here is no every-day misunderstanding,
No transient pique, no cloud that passes over ;
Something most luckless, most unhealable,
Has taken place. The Queen of Hungary
Used formerly to call me her dear aunt,
And ever at departure to embrace me —

WALLENSTEIN.

Now she omitted it ?

DUCHESS (*wiping away her tears after a pause*).

She did embrace me,
But then first when I had already taken

My formal leave, and when the door already
Had closed upon me, then did she come out
In haste, as she had suddenly bethought herself,
And pressed me to her bosom, more with anguish
Than tenderness.

WALLENSTEIN (*seizes her hand soothingly*).

Nay, now collect yourself.
And what of Eggenberg and Lichtenstein,
And of our other friends there?

DUCHESS (*shaking her head*).

I saw none.

WALLENSTEIN.

The ambassador from Spain, who once was wont
To plead so warmly for me?

DUCHESS.

Silent, silent!

WALLENSTEIN.

These suns then are eclipsed for us. Henceforward
Must we roll on, our own fire, our own light.

DUCHESS.

And were it — were it, my dear lord, in that
Which moved about the court in buzz and whisper,
But in the country let itself be heard
Aloud — in that which Father Lanormain
In sundry hints and —

WALLENSTEIN (*eagerly*).

Lanormain! what said he?

DUCHESS.

That you're accused of having daringly
O'erstepped the powers intrusted to you, charged
With traitorous contempt of the emperor
And his supreme behests. The proud Bavarian,
He and the Spaniards stand up your accusers —
That there's a storm collecting over you
Of far more fearful menace than the former one
Which whirled you headlong down at Regensburg.
And people talk, said he, of — Ah!

[*Stifling extreme emotion.*]

WALLENSTEIN.

Proceed!

DUCHESS.

I cannot utter it!

WALLENSTEIN.

Proceed!

DUCHESS.

They talk —

WALLENSTEIN.

Well!

DUCHESS.

Of a second — (*catches her voice and hesitates*).

WALLENSTEIN.

Second —

DUCHESS.

Most disgraceful

Dismission.

WALLENSTEIN.

Talk they ?

[*Strides across the chamber in vehement agitation.*

O ! they force, they thrust me

With violence, against my own will, onward !

DUCHESS (*presses near to him in entreaty*).

Oh ! if there yet be time, my husband ! if
 By giving way and by submission, this
 Can be averted — my dear lord, give way !
 Win down your proud heart to it ! Tell the heart,
 It is your sovereign lord, your emperor,
 Before whom you retreat. Oh ! let no longer
 Low trickling malice blacken your good meaning
 With abhorred venomous glosses. Stand you up
 Shielded and helmed and weaponed with the truth,
 And drive before you into uttermost shame
 These slanderous liars ! Few firm friends have we —
 You know it ! The swift growth of our good fortune,
 It hath but set us up a mark for hatred.
 What are we, if the sovereign's grace and favour
 Stand not before us !

SCENE III.

*Enter the Countess TERZKY, leading in her hand the
 Princess THEKLA, richly adorned with brilliants.*

COUNTESS THEKLA, WALLENSTEIN, DUCHESS.

COUNTESS.

How, sister ! What, already upon business ?

[*Observing the countenance of the* DUCHESS.

And business of no pleasing kind I see,
 Ere he has gladdened at his child. The first

Moment belongs to joy. Here, Friedland ! father !
This is thy daughter.

[THEKLA *approaches with a shy and timid air, and bends herself as about to kiss his hand. He receives her in his arms, and remains standing for some time lost in the feeling of her presence.*

WALLENSTEIN.

Yes ! pure and lovely hath hope risen on me,
I take her as the pledge of greater fortune.

DUCHESS.

'Twas but a little child when you departed
To raise up that great army for the emperor :
And after, at the close of the campaign,
When you returned home out of Pomerania,
Your daughter was already in the convent,
Wherein she has remained till now.

WALLENSTEIN.

The while
We in the field here gave our cares and toils
To make her great, and fight her a free way
To the loftiest earthly good ; lo ! mother Nature
Within the peaceful, silent convent walls,
Has done her part, and out of her free grace
Hath she bestowed on the beloved child
The god-like ; and now leads her thus adorned
To meet her splendid fortune, and my hope.

DUCHESS (*to THEKLA*).

Thou wouldst not now have recognised thy father,
Wouldst thou, my child ? She counted scarce eight
years
When last she saw your face.

THEKLA.

O yes, yes, mother!
 At the first glance! My father has not altered.
 The form that stands before me falsifies
 No feature of the image that hath lived
 So long within me!

WALLENSTEIN.

The voice of my child!

[*Then after a pause.*

I was indignant at my destiny,
 That it denied me a man-child, to be
 Heir of my name and of my prosperous fortune,
 And re-illumine my soon-extinguished being
 In a proud line of princes.
 I wronged my destiny. Here upon this head,
 So lovely in its maiden bloom, will I
 Let fall the garland of a life of war,
 Nor deem it lost, if only I can wreath it,
 Transmuted to a regal ornament,
 Around these beauteous brows.

[*He clasps her in his arms as PICCOLOMINI enters.*

SCENE IV.

*Enter MAX. PICCOLOMINI, and some time after COUNT
 TERZKY, the others remaining as before.*

COUNTESS.

There comes the Paladin who protected us.

WALLENSTEIN.

Max! Welcome, ever welcome! Always wert thou
 The morning star of my best joys!

MAX.

My general —

WALLENSTEIN.

Till now it was the emperor who rewarded thee,
 I but the instrument. This day thou hast bound
 The father to thee, Max! the fortunate father,
 And this debt Friedland's self must pay.

MAX.

My prince!

You made no common hurry to transfer it.
 I come with shame: yea, not without a pang!
 For scarce have I arrived here, scarce delivered
 The mother and the daughter to your arms,
 But there is brought to me from your equerry¹
 A splendid richly-plated hunting dress
 So to remunerate me for my troubles —
 Yes, yes, remunerate me, — since a trouble
 It must be, a mere office, not a favour
 Which I leaped forward to receive, and which
 I came with grateful heart to thank you for.
 No! 'twas not so intended, that my business
 Should be my highest best good fortune!
 [TERZKY enters, and delivers letters to the DUKE,
 which he breaks open hurriedly.

¹ A reviewer in the *Literary Gazette* observes that, in these lines, Mr. Coleridge has misapprehended the meaning of the word "zug," a team, translating it as "anzug," a suit of clothes. The following version, as a substitute, I propose:

When from your stables there is brought to me
 A team of four most richly harnessed horses.

The term, however, is "jagd-zug," which may mean a "hunting equipage," or a "hunting stud;" although Hilpert gives only "a team of four horses."

COUNTESS (*to MAX*).

Remunerate your trouble! For his joy
He makes you recompense. 'Tis not unfitting
For you, Count Piccolomini, to feel
So tenderly — my brother it beseems
To show himself for ever great and princely.

THEKLA.

Then I too must have scruples of his love:
For his munificent hands did ornament me
Ere yet the father's heart had spoken to me.

MAX.

Yes; 'tis his nature ever to be giving
And making happy.

[*He grasps the hand of the DUCHESS with still
increasing warmth.*

How my heart pours out
Its all of thanks to him! O! how I seem
To utter all things in the dear name — Friedland.
While I shall live, so long will I remain
The captive of this name: in it shall bloom
My every fortune, every lovely hope.
Inextricably as in some magic ring
In this name hath my destiny charm-bound me!

COUNTESS (*who during this time has been anxiously
watching the DUKE, and remarks that he is lost
in thought over the letters*).

My brother wishes us to leave him. Come.

WALLENSTEIN (*turns himself around quick, collects him-
self, and speaks with cheerfulness to the DUCHESS*).

Once more I bid thee welcome to the camp,
Thou art the hostess of this court. You, Max,

Will now again administer your old office,
While we perform the sovereign's business here.

[MAX. PICCOLOMINI *offers the DUCHESS his arm*;
the COUNTESS accompanies the PRINCESS.

TERZKY (*calling after him*).

Max., we depend on seeing you at the meeting.

SCENE V.

WALLENSTEIN, COUNT TERZKY.

WALLENSTEIN (*in deep thought, to himself*).

She has seen all things as they are — it is so,
And squares completely with my other notices;
They have determined finally in Vienna,
Have given me my successor already;
It is the King of Hungary, Ferdinand,
The emperor's delicate son! he's now their saviour,
He's the new star that's rising now! Of us
They think themselves already fairly rid,
And as we were deceased, the heir already
Is entering on possession — Therefore — despatch!

[*As he turns around he observes TERZKY, and gives
him a letter.*

Count Altringer will have himself excused,
And Gallas too — I like not this!

TERZKY.

And if
Thou loiterest longer, all will fall away,
One following the other.

WALLENSTEIN.

Altringer

Is master of the Tyrol passes. I must forthwith
 Send some one to him, that he let not in
 The Spaniards on me from the Milanese.
 — Well, and the old Sesin, that ancient trader
 In contraband negotiations, he
 Has shown himself again of late. What brings he
 From the Count Thur?

TERZKY.

The count communicates
 He has found out the Swedish chancellor
 At Halberstadt, where the convention's held,
 Who says, you've tired him out, and that he'll have
 No further dealings with you.

WALLENSTEIN.

And why so?

TERZKY.

He says, you are never in earnest in your speeches;
 That you decoy the Swedes — to make fools of them;
 Will league yourself with Saxony against them,
 And at last make yourself a riddance of them
 With a paltry sum of money.

WALLENSTEIN.

So then, doubtless,
 Yes, doubtless, this same modest Swede expects
 That I shall yield him some fair German tract
 For his prey and booty, that ourselves at last
 On our own soil and native territory
 May be no longer our own lords and masters!
 An excellent scheme! No, no! They must be off,
 Off, off! away! *we* want no such neighbours.

TERZKY.

Nay, yield them up that dot, that speck of land —
It goes not from your portion. If you win
The game, what matters it to you who pays it?

WALLENSTEIN.

Off with them, off! Thou understand'st not this.
Never shall it be said of me, I parcelled
My native land away, dismembered Germany,
Betrayed it to a foreigner, in order
To come with stealthy tread, and filch away
My own share of the plunder — Never! never!
No foreign power shall strike root in the empire,
And least of all these Goths! these hungry wolves!
Who send such envious, hot, and greedy glances
Toward the rich blessings of our German lands!
I'll have their aid to cast and draw my nets,
But not a single fish of all the draught
Shall they come in for.

TERZKY.

You will deal, however,
More fairly with the Saxons? they lose patience
While you shift round and make so many curves.
Say, to what purpose all these masks? Your friends
Are plunged in doubts, baffled, and led astray in
you.
There's Oxenstiern, there's Arnheim — neither knows
What he should think of your procrastinations,
And in the end I prove the liar; all
Passes through me. I've not even your handwriting.

WALLENSTEIN.

I *never* give handwriting; and thou knowest it.

TERZKY.

But how can it be *known* that you are in earnest,
If the act follows not upon the word?
You must yourself acknowledge, that in all
Your intercourses hitherto with the enemy,
You might have done with safety all you have done,
Had you meant nothing further than to gull him
For the emperor's service.

WALLENSTEIN (*after a pause, during which he looks
narrowly on TERZKY*).

And from whence dost thou know
That I'm not gulling him for the emperor's service?
Whence knowest thou that I'm not gulling all of you?
Dost thou know me so well? When made I thee
The intendant of my secret purposes?
I am not conscious that I ever opened
My inmost thoughts to thee. The emperor; it is true,
Hath dealt with me amiss; and if I would
I could repay him with usurious interest
For the evil he hath done me. It delights me
To know my power; but whether I shall use it,
Of that I should have thought that thou couldst speak
No wiser than thy fellows.

TERZKY.

So hast thou always played thy game with us.

[*Enter ILLO.*

SCENE VI.

ILLO, WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY.

WALLENSTEIN.

How stand affairs without? Are they prepared?

ILLO.

You'll find them in the very mood you wish.
They know about the emperor's requisition,
And are tumultuous.

WALLENSTEIN.

How hath Isolani
Declared himself?

ILLO.

He's yours, both soul and body,
Since you built up again his faro-bank.

WALLENSTEIN.

And which way doth Kolatto bend? Hast thou
Made sure of Tiefenbach and Deodati?

ILLO.

What Piccolomini does that they do too.

WALLENSTEIN.

You mean, then, I may venture somewhat with them?

ILLO.

If you are assured of the Piccolomini.

WALLENSTEIN.

Not more assured of mine own self.

TERZKY.

And yet
I would you trusted not so much to Octavio.
The fox!

WALLENSTEIN (*shaking his head*).

All unconditional;

No premises, no reserves.

ILLO.

A thought has struck me.

Does not Count Terzky give us a set banquet
This evening?

TERZKY.

Yes; and all the generals

Have been invited.

ILLO (*to WALLENSTEIN*).

Say, will you here fully

Commission me to use my own discretion?

I'll gain for you the generals' word of honour,
Even as you wish.

WALLENSTEIN.

Gain me their signatures!

How you come by them that is your concern.

ILLO.

And if I bring it to you in black on white,

That all the leaders who are present here

Give themselves up to you, without condition;

Say, will you then — then will you show yourself

In earnest, and with some decisive action

Try your fortuné.

WALLENSTEIN.

Get but the signatures!

ILLO.

Think what thou dost, thou canst not execute

The emperor's orders, nor reduce thine army,

Nor send the regiments to the Spaniards' aid,

Unless thou wouldst resign thy power for ever.
 Think on the other hand — thou canst not spurn
 The emperor's high commands and solemn orders,
 No longer temporise, nor seek evasion,
 Wouldst thou avoid a rupture with the court.
 Resolve then! Wilt thou now by one bold act
 Anticipate their ends, or, doubting still,
 Await the extremity?

WALLENSTEIN.

There's time before
 The extremity arrives.

ILLO.

Seize, seize the hour,
 Ere it slips from you. Seldom comes the moment
 In life, which is indeed sublime and weighty.
 To make a great decision possible,
 O! many things, all transient and all rapid,
 Must meet at once: and, haply, they thus met
 May by that confluence be enforced to pause
 Time long-enough for wisdom, though too short,
 Far, far too short a time for doubt and scruple!
 This is that moment. See, our army chieftains,
 Our best, our noblest, are assembled round you,
 Their king-like leader! On your nod they wait.
 The single threads, which here your prosperous fortune
 Hath woven together in one potent web
 Instinct with destiny, O! let them not
 Unravel of themselves. If you permit
 These chiefs to separate, so unanimous
 Bring you them not a second time together.
 'Tis the high tide that heaves the stranded ship,
 And every individual's spirit waxes
 In the great stream of multitudes. Behold
 They are still here, here still! But soon the war
 Bursts them once more asunder, and in small

Particular anxieties and interests
Scatters their spirit, and the sympathy
Of each man with the whole. He who to-day
Forgets himself, forced onward with the stream,
Will become sober, seeing but himself.
Feel only his own weakness, and with speed
Will face about, and march on in the old
High road of duty, the old broad-trodden road,
And seek but to make shelter in good plight.

WALLENSTEIN.

The time is not yet come.

TERZKY.

So you say always.
But when will it be time?

WALLENSTEIN.

When I shall say it.

ILLO.

You'll wait upon the stars, and on their hours,
Till the earthly hour escapes you. Oh, believe me,
In your own bosom are your destiny's stars.
Confidence in yourself, prompt resolution,
This is your Venus! and the sole malignant,
The only one that harmeth you is doubt.

WALLENSTEIN.

Thou speakest as thou understandest. How oft
And many a time I've told thee Jupiter,
That lustrous god, was setting at thy birth.
Thy visual power subdues no mysteries;
Mole-eyed thou mayest but burrow in the earth,
Blind as the subterrestrial, who with wan

Lead-coloured shine lighted thee into life.
 The common, the terrestrial, thou mayest see,
 With serviceable cunning knit together,
 The nearest with the nearest; and therein
 I trust thee and believe thee! but whate'er
 Full of mysterious import Nature weaves,
 And fashions in the depths — the spirit's ladder,
 That from this gross and visible world of dust,
 Even to the starry world, with thousand rounds,
 Builds itself up; on which the unseen powers
 Move up and down on heavenly ministries —
 The circles in the circles, that approach
 The central sun with ever-narrowing orbit —
 These see the glance alone, the unsealed eye,
 Of Jupiter's glad children born in lustre.

*[He walks across the chamber, then returns, and
 standing still, proceeds.]*

The heavenly constellations make not merely
 The day and nights, summer and spring, not merely
 Signify to the husbandman the seasons
 Of sowing and of harvest. Human action,
 That is the seed, too, of contingencies,
 Strewed on the dark land of futurity
 In hopes to reconcile the powers of fate
 Whence it behoves us to seek out the seed-time,
 To watch the stars, select their proper hours,
 And trace with searching eye the heavenly houses,
 Whether the enemy of growth and thriving
 Hide himself not, malignant, in his corner.
 Therefore permit me my own time. Meanwhile
 Do you your part. As yet I cannot say
 What *I* shall do — only, give way I will not,
 Depose me, too, they shall not. On these points
 You may rely.

PAGE (*entering*).

My lords, the generals.

WALLENSTEIN.

Let them come in.

TERZKY.

Shall all the chiefs be present ?

WALLENSTEIN.

'Twere needless. Both the Piccolomini,
Maradas, Butler, Forgoetsch, Deodati,
Karaffa, Isolani — these may come.

[TERZKY goes out with the PAGE.]

WALLENSTEIN (*to ILLO*).

Hast thou taken heed that Questenberg was watched ?
Had he no means of secret intercourse ?

ILLO.

I have watched him closely — and he spoke with none
But with Octavio.

SCENE VII.

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY, ILLO. — *To them enter QUESTENBERG, OCTAVIO, and MAX. PICCOLOMINI, BUTLER, ISOLANI, MARADAS, and three other Generals. WALLENSTEIN motions QUESTENBERG, who in consequence takes the chair directly opposite to him ; the others follow, arranging themselves according to their rank. There reigns a momentary silence.*

WALLENSTEIN.

I have understood,
'Tis true, the sum and import, Questenberg,
Of your instructions. I have weighed them well,
And formed my final, absolute resolve ;

Yet it seems fitting that the generals
Should hear the will of the emperor from your mouth.
May it please you then to open your commission
Before these noble chieftains ?

QUESTENBERG.

I am ready
To obey you ; but will first entreat your highness,
And all these noble chieftains, to consider,
The imperial dignity and sovereign right
Speaks from my mouth, and not my own presumption.

WALLENSTEIN.

We excuse all preface.

QUESTENBERG.

When his majesty
The emperor to his courageous armies
Presented in the person of Duke Friedland
A most experienced and renowned commander,
He did it in glad hope and confidence
To give thereby to the fortune of the war
A rapid and auspicious change. The onset
Was favourable to his royal wishes.
Bohemia was delivered from the Saxons,
The Swede's career of conquest checked ! These lands
Began to draw breath freely, as Duke Friedland
From all the streams of Germany forced hither
The scattered armies of the enemy ;
Hither invoked as round one magic circle
The Rhinegrave, Bernhard, Banner, Oxenstiern,
Yea, and the never-conquered king himself ;
Here finally, before the eye of Nürnberg,
The fearful game of battle to decide.

WALLENSTEIN.

To the point, so please you.

QUESTENBERG.

A new spirit

At once proclaimed to us the new commander.
No longer strove blind rage with rage more blind ;
But in the enlightened field of skill was shown
How fortitude can triumph over boldness,
And scientific art outweary courage.
In vain they tempt him to the fight, he only
Entrenches him still deeper in his hold,
As if to build an everlasting fortress.
At length grown desperate, now, the king resolves
To storm the camp and lead his wasted legions,
Who daily fall by famine and by plague,
To quicker deaths and hunger and disease.
Through lines of barricades behind whose fence
Death lurks within a thousand mouths of fire,
He yet unconquered strives to storm his way.
There was attack, and there resistance, such
As mortal eye had never seen before ;
Repulsed at last, the king withdrew his troops
From this so murderous field, and not a foot
Of ground was gained by all that fearful slaughter.

WALLENSTEIN.

Pray spare us these recitals from gazettes,
Which we ourselves beheld with deepest horror.

QUESTENBERG.

In Nürnberg's camp the Swedish monarch left
His fame—in Lützen's plains his life. But who
Stood not astounded, when victorious Friedland
After this day of triumph, this proud day,

Marched toward Bohemia with the speed of flight,
 And vanished from the theatre of war?
 While the young Weimar hero¹ forced his way
 Into Franconia, to the Danube, like
 Some delving winter-stream, which, where it rushes,
 Makes its own channel; with such sudden speed
 He marched, and now at once 'fore Regensburg
 Stood to the affright of all good Catholic Christians.
 Then did Bavaria's well-deserving prince
 Entreat swift aidance in his extreme need;
 The emperor sends seven horsemen to Duke Friedland,
 Seven horsemen couriers sends he with the entreaty:
 He superadds his own, and supplicates
 Where as the sovereign lord he can command.
 In vain his supplication! At this moment
 The duke hears only his old hate and grudge,
 Barter the general good to gratify
 Private revenge — and so falls Regensburg.

WALLENSTEIN.

Max., to what period of the war alludes he?
 My recollection fails me here.

MAX.

He means

When we were in Silesia.

WALLENSTEIN.

Ay! is it so!
 But what had we to do *there*?

MAX.

To beat out
 The Swedes and Saxons from the province.

¹ Bernhard of Saxe-Weimar, who succeeded Gustavus in command.

WALLENSTEIN.

True;

In that description which the minister gave,
I seemed to have forgotten the whole war.

[To QUESTENBERG.

Well, but proceed a little.

QUESTENBERG.

We hoped upon the Oder to regain
What on the Danube shamefully was lost.
We looked for deeds of all-astounding grandeur
Upon a theatre of war, on which
A Friedland led in person to the field,
And the famed rival of the great Gustavus
Had but a Thurn and Arnheim to oppose him!
Yet the encounter of their mighty hosts
Served but to feast and entertain each other.
Our country groaned beneath the woes of war,
Yet naught but peace prevailed in Friedland's camp!

WALLENSTEIN.

Full many a bloody strife is fought in vain,
Because its youthful general needs a victory.
But 'tis the privilege of the old commander
To spare the costs of fighting useless battles
Merely to show that he knows how to conquer.
It would have little helped my fame to boast
Of conquest o'er an Arnheim; but far more
Would my forbearance have availed my country,
Had I succeeded to dissolve the alliance
Existing 'twixt the Saxon and the Swede.

QUESTENBERG.

But you did not succeed, and so commenced
The fearful strife anew. And here at length,
Beside the river Oder did the duke

Assert his ancient fame. Upon the fields
Of Steinau did the Swedes lay down their arms,
Subdued without a blow. And here, with others,
The righteousness of heaven to his avenger
Delivered that long-practised stirrer-up
Of insurrection, that curse-laden torch
And kindler of this war, Matthias Thurn.
But he had fallen into magnanimous hands,
Instead of punishment he found reward,
And with rich presents did the duke dismiss
The arch-foe of his emperor.

WALLENSTEIN (*laughs*).

I know,
I know you had already in Vienna
Your windows and your balconies forestalled
To see him on the executioner's cart.
I might have lost the battle, lost it too
With infamy, and still retained your graces —
But, to have cheated them of a spectacle,
Oh! that the good folks of Vienna never,
No, never can forgive me!

QUESTENBERG.

So Silesia
Was freed, and all things loudly called the duke
Into Bavaria, now pressed hard on all sides.
And he did put his troops in motion: slowly,
Quite at his ease, and by the longest road
He traverses Bohemia; but ere ever
He hath once seen the enemy, faces round,
Breaks up the march, and takes to winter-quarters.

WALLENSTEIN.

The troops were pitiably destitute
Of every necessary, every comfort,

The winter came. What thinks his majesty
 His troops are made of? Aren't we men; subjected
 Like other men to wet, and cold, and all
 The circumstances of necessity?
 Oh, miserable lot of the poor soldier!
 Wherever he comes in all flee before him,
 And when he goes away the general curse
 Follows him on his route. All must be seized.
 Nothing is given him. And compelled to seize
 From every man he's every man's abhorrence.
 Behold, here stand my generals. Karaffa!
 Count Deodati! Butler! Tell this man
 How long the soldier's pay is in the arrears.

BUTLER.

Already a full year.

WALLENSTEIN.

And 'tis the hire
 That constitutes the hireling's name and duties,
 The soldier's pay is the soldier's covenant.¹

QUESTENBERG.

Ah! this is a far other tone from that
 In which the duke spoke eight, nine years ago.

WALLENSTEIN.

Yes! 'tis my fault, I know it: I myself
 Have spoilt the emperor by indulging him.

¹ The original is not translatable into English:

Und sein Sold
 Muss dem *Soldaten* werden, darnach heisst er.

It might perhaps have been thus rendered:

And that for which he sold his services,
 The soldier must receive, —

but a false or doubtful etymology is no more than a dull pun.

Nine years ago, during the Danish war,
I raised him up a force, a mighty force,
Forty or fifty thousand men, that cost him
Of his own purse no doit. Through Saxony
The fury goddess of the war marched on,
E'en to the surf-rocks of the Baltic, bearing
The terrors of his name. That was a time!
In the whole imperial realm no name like mine
Honoured with festival and celebration —
And Albrecht Wallenstein, it was the title
Of the third jewel in his crown!
But at the Diet, when the princes met
At Regensburg, there, there the whole broke out,
There 'twas laid open, there it was made known
Out of what money-bag I had paid the host,
And what were now my thanks, what had I now
That I, a faithful servant of the sovereign,
Had loaded on myself the people's curses,
And let the princes of the empire pay
The expenses of this war that aggrandises
The emperor alone. What thanks had I?
What? I was offered up to their complaint,
Dismissed, degraded!

QUESTENBERG.

But your highness knows
What little freedom he possessed of action
In that disastrous Diet.

WALLENSTEIN.

Death and hell!
I had that which could have procured him freedom.
No! since 'twas proved so inauspicious to me
To serve the emperor at the empire's cost,
I have been taught far other trains of thinking
Of the empire and the Diet of the empire.

From the emperor, doubtless, I received this staff,
But now I hold it as the empire's general, —
For the common weal, the universal interest,
And no more for that one man's aggrandisement!
But to the point. What is it that's desired of me?

QUESTENBERG.

First, his imperial majesty hath willed
That without pretexts of delay the army
Evacuate Bohemia.

WALLENSTEIN.

In this season?
And to what quarter wills the emperor
That we direct our course?

QUESTENBERG.

To the enemy.
His majesty resolves, that Regensburg
Be purified from the enemy ere Easter,
That Lutheranism may be no longer preached
In that cathedral, nor heretical
Defilement desecrate the celebration
Of that pure festival.

WALLENSTEIN.

My generals,
Can this be realised?

ILLO.

'Tis not possible.

BUTLER.

It can't be realised.

QUESTENBERG.

The emperor
Already hath commanded Colonel Suys
To advance towards Bavaria.

WALLENSTEIN.

What did Suys?

QUESTENBERG.

That which his duty prompted. He advanced.

WALLENSTEIN.

What! he advanced? And I, his general,
Had given him orders, peremptory orders,
Not to desert his station! Stands it thus
With my authority? Is this the obedience
Due to my office, which being thrown aside,
No war can be conducted? Chieftains, speak:
You be the judges, generals! What deserves
That officer who, of his oath neglectful,
Is guilty of contempt of orders?

ILLO.

Death.

WALLENSTEIN (*raising his voice, as all but ILLO had
remained silent and seemingly scrupulous*).

Count Piccolomini! what has he deserved?

MAX. PICCOLOMINI (*after a long pause*).

According to the letter of the law,
Death.

ISOLANI.

Death.

BUTLER.

Death, by the laws of war.

[QUESTENBERG *rises from his seat*, WALLENSTEIN
follows, all the rest rise.

WALLENSTEIN.

To this the law condemns him, and not I.
And if I show him favour, 'twill arise
From the reverence that I owe my emperor.

QUESTENBERG.

If so, I can say nothing further — *here!*

WALLENSTEIN.

I accepted the command but on conditions!
And this the first, that to the diminution
Of my authority no human being,
Not even the emperor's self, should be entitled
To do aught, or to say aught, with the army.
If I stand warranter of the *event*,
Placing my honour and my head in pledge,
Needs must I have full mastery in all
The means thereto. What rendered this Gustavus
Resistless, and unconquered upon earth?
This — that he was the monarch in his army!
A monarch, one who is indeed a monarch,
Was never yet subdued but by his equal.
But to the point! The best is yet to come.
Attend now, generals!

QUESTENBERG.

The Prince Cardinal
Begins his route at the approach of spring
From the Milanese; and leads a Spanish army
Through Germany into the Netherlands.

That he may march secure and unimpeded,
'Tis the emperor's will you grant him a detachment
Of eight horse-regiments from the army here.

WALLENSTEIN.

Yes, yes! I understand! Eight regiments! Well,
Right well concerted, Father Lanormain!
Eight thousand horse! Yes, yes! 'tis as it should be!
I see it coming.

QUESTENBERG.

There is nothing coming.
All stands in front: the counsel of state-prudence,
The dictate of necessity!

WALLENSTEIN.

What then?

What, my lord envoy? May I not be suffered
To understand that folks are tired of seeing
The sword's hilt in *my* grasp, and that your court
Snatch eagerly at this pretence, and use
The Spanish title, and drain off my forces,
To lead into the empire a new army
Unsubjected to my control? To throw me
Plumply aside, — I am still too powerful for you
To venture that. My stipulation runs,
That all the imperial forces shall obey me
Where'er the German is the native language.
Of Spanish troops and of prince cardinals,
That take their route as visitors, through the empire,
There stands no syllable in my stipulation.
No syllable! And so the politic court
Steals in on tiptoe, and creeps round behind it;
First makes me weaker, then to be dispensed with,
Till it dares strike at length a bolder blow,
And make short work with me.
What need of all these crooked ways, lord envoy?

Straightforward, man! his compact with me pinches
The emperor. He would that I moved off!
Well! I will gratify him.

[Here there commences an agitation among the generals, which increases continually.]

It grieves me for my noble officers' sakes;
I see not yet by what means they will come at
The moneys they have advanced, or how obtain
The recompense their services demand.
Still a new leader brings new claimants forward,
And prior merit superannuates quickly.
There serve here many foreigners in the army,
And were the man in all else brave and gallant,
I was not wont to make nice scrutiny
After his pedigree or catechism.
This will be otherwise i' the time to come.
Well; me no longer it concerns. *[He seats himself.]*

MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

Forbid it, Heaven, that it should come to this!
Our troops will swell in dreadful fermentation —
The emperor is abused — it cannot be.

ISOLANI.

It cannot be; all goes to instant wreck.

WALLENSTEIN.

Thou hast said truly, faithful Isolani!
What *we* with toil and foresight have built up
Will go to wreck — all go to instant wreck.
What then? Another chieftain is soon found,
Another army likewise (who dares doubt it?)
Will flock from all sides to the emperor,
At the first beat of his recruiting drum.

[During this speech, ISOLANI, TERZKY, ILLO, and MARADAS talk confusedly with great agitation.]

MAX. PICCOLOMINI (*busily and passionately going from one to another, and soothing them*).

Hear, my commander! Hear me, generals!
 Let me conjure you, duke! Determine nothing,
 Till we have met and represented to you
 Our joint remonstrances! Nay, calmer! Friends!
 I hope all may yet be set right again.

TERZKY.

Away! let us away! in the antechamber
 Find we the others. [*They go.*]

BUTLER (*to QUESTENBERG*).

If good counsel gain
 Due audience from your wisdom, my lord envoy,
 You will be cautious how you show yourself
 In public for some hours to come — or hardly
 Will that gold key protect you from maltreatment
[*Commutations heard from without.*]

WALLENSTEIN.

A salutary counsel — Thou, Octavio!
 Wilt answer for the safety of our guest.
 Farewell, Von Questenberg!

[QUESTENBERG *is about to speak.*

Nay, not a word.

Not one word more of that detested subject!
 You have performed your duty. We know now
 To separate the office from the man.

[*As QUESTENBERG is going off with OCTAVIO,
 GOETZ, TIEFENBACH, KOLATTO, press in, sev-
 eral other generals following them.*]

GOETZ.

Where's he who means to rob us of our general?

TIEFENBACH (*at the same time*).

What are we forced to hear? That thou wilt leave us?

KOLATTO (*at the same time*).

We will live with thee, we will die with thee.

WALLENSTEIN (*with stateliness, and pointing to ILLO*).

There! the field-marshal knows our will. [*Exit.*

[*While all are going off the stage, the curtain drops.*

ACT III.

SCENE I. *A Small Chamber.*

ILLO and TERZKY.

TERZKY.

Now for this evening's business! How intend you
To manage with the generals at the banquet?

ILLO.

Attend! We frame a formal declaration,
Wherein we to the duke consign ourselves
Collectively, to be and to remain
His, both with life and limb, and not to spare
The last drop of our blood for *him*, provided,
So doing we infringe no oath or duty
We may be under to the emperor. Mark!
This reservation we expressly make
In a particular clause, and save the conscience.
Now hear! this formula so framed and worded
Will be presented to them for perusal
Before the banquet. No one will find in it
Cause of offence or scruple. Hear now further!
After the feast, when now the vapouring wine

Opens the heart, and shuts the eyes, we let
A counterfeited paper, in the which
This one particular clause has been left out,
Go round for signatures.

TERZKY.

How! think you then
That they'll believe themselves bound by an oath,
Which we have tricked them into by a juggle?

ILLO.

We shall have caught and caged them! Let them then
Beat their wings bare against the wires, and rave
Loud as they may against our treachery;
At court their signatures will be believed
Far more than their most holy affirmations.
Traitors they are, and must be; therefore wisely
Will make a virtue of necessity.

TERZKY.

Well, well, it shall content me: let but something
Be *done*, let only some decisive blow
Set us in motion.

ILLO.

Besides, 'tis of subordinate importance
How, or how far, we may thereby propel
The generals. 'Tis enough that we persuade
The duke that they are his. Let him but act
In his determined mood, as if he had them,
And he *will* have them. Where he plunges in,
He makes a whirlpool, and all stream down to it.

TERZKY.

His policy is such a labyrinth,
That many a time when I have thought myself

Close at his side, he's gone at once, and left me
Ignorant of the ground where I was standing.
He lends the enemy his ear, permits me
To write to them, to Arnheim; to Sesina
Himself comes forward blank and undisguised;
Talks with us by the hour about his plans,
And when I think I have him — off at once —
He has slipped from me, and appears as if
He had no scheme, but to retain his place.

ILLO.

He give up his old plans! I'll tell you, friend!
His soul is occupied with nothing else,
Even in his sleep — they are his thoughts, his dreams,
That day by day he questions for this purpose
The motions of the planets —

TERZKY.

Ah! you know
This night, that is now coming, he with Seni
Shuts himself up in the astrological tower
To make joint observations — for I hear
It is to be a night of weight and crisis;
And something great, and of long expectation,
Takes place in heaven.

ILLO.

O that it might take place
On earth! The generals are full of zeal,
And would with ease be led to anything
Rather than lose their chief. Observe, too, that
We have at last a fair excuse before us
To form a close alliance 'gainst the court,
Yet innocent its title, bearing simply
That we support him only in command.

But in the ardour of pursuit thou knowest
Men soon forget the goal from which they started.
The object I've in view is that the prince
Shall either find them, or believe them ready
For every hazard. Opportunity
Will tempt him on. Be the great step once taken,
Which at Vienna's court can ne'er be pardoned,
The force of circumstances will lead him onward
The farther still and farther. 'Tis the choice
That makes him undecisive — come but need,
And all his powers and wisdom will come with it.

TERZKY.

'Tis this alone the enemy awaits
To change their chief and join their force with ours.

ILLO.

Come! be we bold and make despatch. The work
In this next day or two must thrive and grow
More than it has for years. And let but only
Things first turn up auspicious here below —
Mark what I say — the right stars, too, will show
themselves.
Come to the generals. All is in the glow,
And must be beaten while 'tis malleable.

TERZKY.

Do you go thither, Illo? I must stay
And wait here for the Countess Terzky. Know
That we, too, are not idle. Break one string,
A second is in readiness.

ILLO.

Yes! yes!

I saw your lady smile with such sly meaning.
What's in the wind?

TERZKY.

A secret. Hush! she comes.

[*Exit ILLO.*]

SCENE II.

The COUNTESS steps out from a closet.

COUNT and COUNTESS TERZKY.

TERZKY.

Well — is she coming? I can keep him back
No longer.

COUNTESS.

She will be here instantly,
You only send him.

TERZKY.

I am not quite certain,
I must confess it, countess, whether or not
We are earning the duke's thanks hereby. You know
No ray has broke out from him on this point.
You have o'erruled me, and yourself know best
How far you dare proceed.

COUNTESS.

I take it on me.

[*Talking to herself while she is advancing.*]

Here's no heed of full powers and commissions;
My cloudy duke! we understand each other —
And without words. What could I not unriddle,
Wherefore the daughter should be sent for hither,
Why first he, and no other should be chosen
To fetch her hither? This sham of betrothing her

To a bridegroom,¹ whom no one knows — No! no!
 This may blind others! I see through thee, brother!
 But it beseems thee not to draw a card
 At such a game. Not yet! It all remains
 Mutely delivered up to my finessing.
 Well — thou shalt not have been deceived, Duke Fried-
 land,
 In her who is thy sister.

SERVANT (*enters*).

The commanders! [*Exit.*]

TERZKY (*to the COUNTESS*).

Take care you heat his fancy and affections —
 Possess him with a reverie, and send him
 Absent and dreaming to the banquet; that
 He may not boggle at the signature.

COUNTESS.

Take care of your guests! Go, send him hither.

TERZKY.

All rests upon his undersigning.

COUNTESS (*interrupting him*).

Go to your guests! Go —

ILLO (*comes back*).

Where art staying, Terzky?
 The house is full, and all expecting you.

¹ In Germany, after honourable addresses have been paid and formally accepted, the lovers are called bride and bridegroom, even though the marriage should not take place till years afterward.

TERZKY.

Instantly ! instantly ! *[To the COUNTESS.]*
 And let him not
 Stay here too long. It might awake suspicion
 In the old man —

COUNTESS.

A truce with your precautions !
[Exeunt TERZKY and ILLO.]

SCENE III.

COUNTESS, MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

MAX. *(peeping in on the stage slyly).*

Aunt Terzky ! may I venture ?

*[Advances to the middle of the stage, and looks
 around him with uneasiness.]*

She's not here !

Where is she ?

COUNTESS.

Look but somewhat narrowly
 In yonder corner, lest perhaps she lie
 Concealed behind that screen.

MAX.

There lie her gloves !

[Snatches at them, but the COUNTESS takes them herself.]

You unkind lady ! You refuse me this,
 You make it an amusement to torment me.

COUNTESS.

And this the thanks you give me for my trouble ?

MAX.

O, if you felt the oppression at my heart !
Since we've been here, so to constrain myself
With such poor stealth to hazard words and glances,
These, these are not my habits !

COUNTESS.

You have still
Many new habits to acquire, young friend !
But on this proof of your obedient temper
I must continue to insist ; and only
On this condition can I play the agent
For your concerns.

MAX.

But wherefore comes she not ?
Where is she ?

COUNTESS.

Into *my* hands you must place it
Whole and entire. Whom could you find, indeed,
More zealously affected to your interest ?
No soul on earth must know it — not your father ;
He must not, above all.

MAX.

Alas ! what danger ?
Here is no face on which I might concentrate
All the enraptured soul stirs up within me.
O lady ! tell me, is all changed around me ?
Or is it only I ?

I find myself,
As among strangers ! Not a trace is left
Of all my former wishes, former joys.
Where has it vanished to ? There was a time
When even, methought, with such a world as this,
I was not discontented. Now how flat !

How stale! No life, no bloom, no flavour in it!
 My comrades are intolerable to me.
 My father — even to him I can say nothing.
 My arms, my military duties — O!
 They are such wearying toys!

COUNTESS.

But, gentle friend!
 I must entreat it of your condescension,
 You would be pleased to sink your eye, and favour
 With one short glance or two this poor stale world,
 Where even now much, and of much moment,
 Is on the eve of its completion.

MAX.

Something,
 I can't but know is going forward round me.
 I see it gathering, crowding, driving on,
 In wild uncouth movements. Well,
 In due time, doubtless, it will reach even me.
 Where think you I have been, dear lady? Nay,
 No raillery. The turmoil of the camp,
 The spring-tide of acquaintance rolling in,
 The pointless jest, the empty conversation,
 Oppressed and stifled me. I gasped for air —
 I could not breathe — I was constrained to fly,
 To seek a silence out for my full heart;
 And a pure spot wherein to feel my happiness.
 No smiling, countess! In the church was I.
 There is a cloister here "To the heaven's gate,"¹
 Thither I went, there found myself alone.
 Over the altar hung a holy mother;

¹ I am doubtful whether this be the dedication of the cloister, or the name of one of the city gates, near which it stood. I have translated it in the former sense; but fearful of having made some blunder, I add the original, — *Es ist ein Kloster hier zur Himmelsporte.*

A wretched painting 'twas, yet 'twas the friend
That I was seeking in this moment. Ah,
How oft have I beheld that glorious form
In splendour, 'mid ecstatic worshippers ;
Yet, still it moved me not ! and now at once
Was my devotion cloudless as my love.

COUNTESS.

Enjoy your fortune and felicity !
Forget the world around you. Meantime, friendship
Shall keep strict vigils for you, anxious, active.
Only be manageable when that friendship
Points you the road to full accomplishment.

MAX.

But where abides she then ? Oh, golden time
Of travel, when each morning sun united
And but the coming night divided us ;
Then ran no sand, then struck no hour for us,
And time, in our excess of happiness,
Seemed on its course eternal to stand still.
Oh, he hath fallen from out his heaven of bliss
Who can descend to count the changing hours,
No clock strikes ever for the happy !

COUNTESS.

How long is it since you declared your passion ?

MAX.

This morning did I hazard the first word.

COUNTESS.

This morning the first time in twenty days ?

MAX.

'Twas at that hunting-castle, betwixt here
 And Nepomuck, where *you* had joined us, and —
 That was the last relay of the whole journey;
 In a balcony we were standing mute,
 And gazing out upon the dreary field:
 Before us the dragoons were riding onward,
 The safeguard which the duke had sent us — heavy;
 The inquietude of parting lay upon me,
 And trembling ventured I at length these words:
 This all reminds me, noble maiden, that
 To-day I must take leave of my good fortune.
 A few hours more, and you will find a father,
 Will see yourself surrounded by new friends,
 And I henceforth shall be but as a stranger,
 Lost in the many — “Speak with my Aunt Terzky!”
 With hurrying voice she interrupted me.
 She faltered. I beheld a glowing red
 Possess her beautiful cheeks, and from the ground
 Raised slowly up her eye met mine — no longer
 Did I control myself.

[*The Princess THEKLA appears at the door, and remains standing, observed by the COUNTESS, but not by PICCOLOMINI.*

With instant boldness

I caught her in my arms, my lips touched hers;
 There was a rustling in the room close by;
 It parted us — 'Twas you. What since has happened
 You know.

COUNTESS (*after a pause, with a stolen glance at THEKLA*).

And is it your excess of modesty
 Or are you so incurious, that you do not
 Ask me too of my secret?

MAX.

Of *your* secret?

COUNTESS.

Why, yes! When in the instant after you
I stepped into the room, and found my niece there;
What she in this first moment of the heart
Taken with surprise —

MAX. (*with eagerness*).

Well?

SCENE IV.

THEKLA (*hurries forward*), COUNTESS, MAX. PICCOLO-
MINI.

THEKLA (*to the COUNTESS*).

Spare yourself the trouble:
That hears he better from myself.

MAX. (*stepping backward*).

My princess!

What have you let her hear me say, Aunt Terzky?

THEKLA (*to the COUNTESS*).

Has he been here long?

COUNTESS.

Yes; and soon must go.

Where have *you* stayed so long?

THEKLA.

Alas! my mother

Wept so again! and I — I see her suffer,
Yet cannot keep myself from being happy.

MAX.

Now once again I have courage to look on you.
To-day at noon I could not.
The dazzle of the jewels that played round you
Hid the beloved from me.

THEKLA.

Then you saw me
With your eye only — and not with your heart?

MAX.

This morning, when I found you in the circle
Of all your kindred, in your father's arms,
Beheld myself an alien in this circle,
O! what an impulse felt I in that moment
To fall upon his neck, to call him *father*!
But his stern eye o'erpowered the swelling passion,
It dared not but be silent. And those brilliants,
That like a crown of stars enwreathed your brows,
They scared me too! O wherefore, wherefore should he
At the first meeting spread as 'twere the ban
Of excommunication round you, — wherefore
Dress up the angel as for sacrifice,
And cast upon the light and joyous heart
The mournful burden of his station? Fitly
May love dare woo for love; but such a splendour
Might none but monarchs venture to approach.

THEKLA.

Hush! not a word more of this mummerly;
You see how soon the burden is thrown off.

[To the COUNTESS.]

He is not in spirits. Wherefore is he not?
'Tis you, aunt, that have made him all so gloomy!
He had quite another nature on the journey —

So calm, so bright, so joyous eloquent. [To MAX.
 It was my wish to see you always so,
 And never otherwise!

MAX.

You find yourself
 In your great father's arms, beloved lady!
 All in a new world, which does homage to you,
 And which, were't only by its novelty,
 Delights your eye.

THEKLA.

Yes; I confess to you
 That many things delight me here: this camp,
 This motley stage of warriors, which renews
 So manifold the image of my fancy,
 And binds to life, binds to reality,
 What hitherto had but been present to me
 As a sweet dream!

MAX.

Alas! not so to me.
 It makes a dream of my reality.
 Upon some island in the ethereal heights
 I've lived for these last days. This mass of men
 Forces me down to earth. It is a bridge
 That, reconducting to my former life,
 Divides me and my heaven.

THEKLA.

The game of life
 Looks cheerful, when one carries in one's heart
 The unalienable treasure. 'Tis a game,
 Which, having once reviewed, I turn more joyous
 Back to my deeper and appropriate bliss.
[Breaking off, and in a sportive tone.]
 In this short time that I've been present here.
 What new unheard-of things have I not seen;

And yet they all must give place to the wond
Which this mysterious castle guards.

COUNTESS (*recollecting*).

And what
Can this be then? Methought I was acquainted
With all the dusky corners of this house.

THEKLA (*smiling*).

Ay, but the road thereto is watched by spirits,
Two griffins still stand sentry at the door.

COUNTESS (*laughs*).

The astrological tower! How happens it
That this same sanctuary, whose access
Is to all others so impracticable,
Opens before you even at your approach?

THEKLA.

A dwarfish old man with a friendly face
And snow-white hairs, whose gracious services
Were mine at first sight, opened me the doors.

MAX.

That is the duke's astrologer, old Seni.

THEKLA.

He questioned me on many points; for instance,
When I was born, what month, and on what day,
Whether by day or in the night.

COUNTESS.

He wished
To erect a figure for your horoscope.

THEKLA.

My hand too he examined, shook his head
With much sad meaning, and the lines, methought,
Did not square over truly with his wishes.

COUNTESS.

Well, princess, and what found you in this tower?
My highest privilege has been to snatch
A side-glance, and away!

THEKLA.

It was a strange
Sensation that came o'er me, when at first
From the broad sunshine I stepped in; and now
The narrowing line of daylight, that ran after
The closing door, was gone; and all about me
'Twas pale and dusky night, with many shadows
Fantastically cast. Here six or seven
Colossal statues, and all kings, stood round me
In a half-circle. Each one in his hand
A sceptre bore, and on his head a star;
And in the tower no other light was there
But from these stars, all seemed to come from them.
"These are the planets," said that low old man,
"They govern worldly fates, and for that cause
Are imaged here as kings. He farthest from you,
Spiteful and cold, an old man melancholy,
With bent and yellow forehead, he is Saturn.
He opposite, the king with the red light,
An armed man for the battle, that is Mars;
And both these bring but little luck to man."
But at his side a lovely lady stood,
The star upon her head was soft and bright,
Oh, that was Venus, the bright star of joy.
And the left hand, lo! Mercury, with wings
Quite in the middle glittered silver bright.

A cheerful man, and with a monarch's mien ;
And this was Jupiter, my father's star :
And at his side I saw the Sun and Moon.

MAX.

Oh, never rudely will I blame his faith
In the might of stars and angels. 'Tis not merely
The human being's pride that peoples space
With life and mystical predominance ;
Since likewise for the stricken heart of love
This visible nature, and this common world,
Is all too narrow ; yea, a deeper import
Lurks in the legend told my infant years
Than lies upon that truth, we live to learn.
For fable is love's world, his home, his birthplace ;
Delightedly dwells he among fays and talismans,
And spirits ; and delightedly believes
Divinities, being himself divine.
The intelligible forms of ancient poets,
The fair humanities of old religion,
The power, the beauty, and the majesty,
That had her haunts in dale, or piny mountain,
Or forest by slow stream, or pebbly spring,
Or chasms, and watery depths, all these have vanished
They live no longer in the faith of reason !
But still the heart doth need a language, still
Doth the old instinct bring back the old names
And to yon starry world they now are gone,
Spirits or gods, that used to share this earth
With man as with their friend,¹ and to the lover
Yonder they move, from yonder visible sky
Shoot influence down : and even at this day
'Tis Jupiter who brings whate'er is great,
And Venus who brings everything that's fair !

¹ No more of talk, where god or angel guest
With man, as with his friend familiar, used
To sit indulgent. — *Paradise Lost*, B. ix.

THEKLA.

And if **this** be the science of the stars,
I too, with glad and zealous industry,
Will learn acquaintance with this cheerful faith.
It is a gentle and affectionate thought,
That in immeasurable heights above us,
At our first birth, the wreath of love was woven,
With sparkling stars for flowers.

COUNTESS.

Not only roses
But thorns too hath the heaven, and well for you
Leave they your wreath of love inviolate:
What Venus twined, the bearer of glad fortune,
The sullen orb of Mars soon tears to pieces.

MAX.

Soon will this gloomy empire reach its close.
Blest be the general's zeal: into the laurel
Will he inweave the olive-branch, presenting
Peace to the shouting nations. Then no wish
Will have remained for his great heart! Enough
Has he performed for glory, and can now
Live for himself and his. To his domains
Will he retire; he has a stately seat
Of fairest view at Gitschin; Reichenberg,
And Friedland Castle, both lie pleasantly;
Even to the foot of the huge mountains here
Stretches the chase and covers of his forests:
His ruling passion to create the splendid
He can indulge without restraint; can give
A princely patronage to every art,
And to all worth a sovereign's protection.
Can build, can plant, can watch the starry courses —

COUNTESS.

Yet I would have you look, and look again,
Before you lay aside your arms, young friend !
A gentle bride, as she is, is well worth it,
That you should woo and win her with the sword.

MAX.

Oh, that the sword could win her !

COUNTESS.

What was that ?
Did you hear nothing ? Seemed as if I heard
Tumult and larum in the banquet-room.
[Exit COUNTESS.]

SCENE V.

THEKLA and MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

THEKLA (*as soon as the COUNTESS is out of sight, in
a quick, low voice to PICCOLOMINI*).

Don't trust them ! They are false !

MAX.

Impossible !

THEKLA.

Trust no one here but me. I saw at once,
They had a purpose.

MAX.

Purpose ! but what purpose ?
And how can we be instrumental to it ?

THEKLA.

I know no more than you ; but yet believe me :
There's some design in this ; to make us happy,

To realise our union — trust me, love !
They but pretend to wish it.

MAX.

But these Terzkys —
Why use we them at all ? Why not your mother ?
Excellent creature ! she deserves from us
A full and filial confidence.

THEKLA.

She doth love you,
Doth rate you high before all others — but —
But such a secret — she would never have
The courage to conceal it from my father.
For her own peace of mind we must preserve it
A secret from her too.

MAX.

Why any secret ?
I love not secrets. Mark what I will do.
I'll throw me at your father's feet — let him
Decide upon my fortunes ! He is true,
He wears no mask — he hates all crooked ways —
He is so good, so noble !

THEKLA (*falls on his neck*).

That are you !

MAX.

You knew him only since this morn ! but I
Have lived ten years already in his presence ;
And who knows whether in this very moment
He is not merely waiting for us both
To own our loves in order to unite us ?

You are silent!
You look at me with such a hopelessness!
What have you to object against your father?

THEKLA.

I? Nothing. Only he's so occupied —
He has no leisure time to think about
The happiness of us two. [*Taking his hand tenderly*
Follow me!

Let us not place too great a faith in men.
These Terzkys — we will still be grateful to them
For every kindness, but not trust them further
Than they deserve; — and in all else rely
On our own hearts!

MAX.

O! shall we e'er be happy?

THEKLA.

Are we not happy now? Art thou not mine?
Am I not thine? There lives within my soul
A lofty courage — 'tis love gives it me!
I ought to be less open — ought to hide
My heart more from thee — so decorum dictates:
But where in this place couldst thou seek for truth,
If in my mouth thou didst not find it?
We now have met, then let us hold each other
Clasped in a lasting and a firm embrace.
Believe me this was more than their intent.
Then be our loves like some blest relic kept
Within the deep recesses of the heart.
From heaven alone the love has been bestowed,
To heaven alone our gratitude is due;
It can work wonders for us still.

SCENE VI.

To them enters the COUNTESS TERZKY.

COUNTESS (*in a pressing manner*).

Come, come!

My husband sends me for you. It is now
The latest moment.

[*They not appearing to attend to what she says,
she steps between them.*]

Part you!

THEKLA.

Oh, not yet!

It has been scarce a moment.

COUNTESS.

Ay! Then time
Flies swiftly with your highness, princess niece!

MAX.

There is no hurry, aunt.

COUNTESS.

Away! away!
The folks begin to miss you. Twice already
His father has asked for him.

THEKLA.

Ha, his father!

COUNTESS.

You understand that, niece!

THEKLA.

Why needs he

To go at all to that society?

'Tis not his proper company. They may
Be worthy men, but he's too young for them;
In brief, he suits not such society.

COUNTESS.

You mean, you'd rather keep him wholly here?

THEKLA (*with energy*).

Yes! you have hit it, aunt! That is my meaning,
Leave him here wholly! Tell the company —

COUNTESS.

What! have you lost your senses, niece?
Count, you remember the conditions. Come!

MAX. (*to THEKLA*).

Lady, I must obey. Farewell, dear lady!

[THEKLA turns away from him with a quick
motion.

What say you then, dear lady?

THEKLA (*without looking at him*).

Nothing. Go!

MAX.

Can I, when you are angry —

[He draws up to her, their eyes meet, she stands
silent a moment, then throws herself into
his arms; he presses her fast to his
heart.

COUNTESS.

Off! Heavens! if any one should come!

Hark! What's that noise? It comes this way. Off!

[MAX. *tears himself away out of her arms and goes. The COUNTESS accompanies him. THEKLA follows him with her eyes at first, walks restlessly across the room, then stops, and remains standing, lost in thought. A guitar lies on the table, she seizes it as by a sudden emotion, and after she has played awhile an irregular and melancholy symphony, she falls gradually into the music and sings.*

SCENE VII.

THEKLA (*plays and sings*).

The cloud doth gather, the greenwood roar,
The damsel paces along the shore;
The billows, they tumble with might, with might;
And she flings out her voice to the darksome night;
Her bosom is swelling with sorrow;
The world it is empty, the heart will die,
There's nothing to wish for beneath the sky:
Thou Holy One, call thy child away!
I've lived and loved, and that was to-day;
Make ready my grave-clothes to-morrow.¹

¹ I found it not in my power to translate this song with literal fidelity, preserving at the same time the Alcaic movement, and have therefore added the original, with a prose translation. Some of my readers may be more fortunate.

THEKLA (*spielt und singt*).

Der Eichwald brauset, die Wolken ziehn,
Das Mägdlein wandelt an Ufers Grün;
Es bricht sich die Welle mit Macht, mit Macht,
Und sie singt hinaus in die finstre Nacht,
Das Auge von Weinen getrübet:

SCENE VIII.

COUNTESS (*returns*), THEKLA.

COUNTESS.

Fie, lady niece ! to throw yourself upon him
 Like a poor gift to one who cares not for it,
 And so must be flung after him ! For you,
 Duke Friedland's only child, I should have thought
 It had been more becoming to have shown yourself
 More chary of your person.

Das Herz ist gestorben, die Welt ist leer,
 Und weiter giebt sie dem Wunsche nichts mehr.
 Du Heilige, rufe dein Kind zurück,
 Ich habe genossen das irdische Glück,
 Ich habe gelebt und geliebet.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

THEKLA (*plays and sings*).

The oak-forest bellows, the clouds gather, the damsel walks to
 and fro on the green of the shore ; the wave breaks with might,
 with might, and she sings out into the dark night, her eye discol-
 oured with weeping : the heart is dead, the world is empty, and
 further gives it nothing more to the wish. Thou Holy One, call
 thy child home. I have enjoyed the happiness of this world, I
 have lived and have loved.

I cannot but add here an imitation of this song, with which my
 friend, Charles Lamb, has favoured me, and which appears to me
 to have caught the happiest manner of our old ballads :

The clouds are blackening, the storms threatening,
 The cavern doth mutter, the greenwood moan !
 Billows are breaking, the damsel's heart aching,
 Thus in the dark night she singeth alone,
 Her eye upward roving :

The world is empty, the heart is dead surely,
 In this world plainly all seemeth amiss ;
 To thy heaven, Holy One, take home thy little one,
 I have partaken of all earth's bliss,
 Both living and loving.

THEKLA (*rising*).

And what mean you ?

COUNTESS.

I mean, niece, that you should not have forgotten
Who you are, and who he is. But perchance
That never once occurred to you.

THEKLA.

What then ?

COUNTESS.

That you're the daughter of the Prince Duke Friedland.

THEKLA.

Well, and what farther ?

COUNTESS.

What ? a pretty question !

THEKLA.

He was born that which we have but become.
He's of an ancient Lombard family,
Son of a reigning princess.

COUNTESS.

Are you dreaming ?
Talking in sleep ? An excellent jest, forsooth !
We shall no doubt right courteously entreat him
To honour with his hand the richest heiress
In Europe.

THEKLA.

That will not be necessary.

COUNTESS.

Methinks 'twere well, though, not to run the hazard.

THEKLA.

His father loves him ; Count Octavio
Will interpose no difficulty —

COUNTESS.

His !

His father ! His ! But yours, niece, what of yours ?

THEKLA.

Why, I begin to think you fear his father,
So anxiously you hide it from the man !
His father, his, I mean.

COUNTESS (*looks at her as scrutinising*).

Niece, you are false.

THEKLA.

Are you then wounded ? O, be friends with me !

COUNTESS.

You hold your game for won already. Do not
Triumph too soon !

THEKLA (*interrupting her, and attempting to soothe her*).

Nay now, be friends with me.

COUNTESS.

It is not yet so far gone.

THEKLA.

I believe you.

COUNTESS.

Did you suppose your father had laid out
His most important life in toils of war,
Denied himself each quiet earthly bliss,
Had banished slumbers from his tent, devoted
His noble head to care, and for this only,
To make a happier pair of you? At length
To draw you from your convent, and conduct
In easy triumph to your arms the man
That chanced to please your eyes! All this, methinks
He might have purchased at a cheaper rate.

THEKLA.

That which he did not plant for me might yet
Bear me fair fruitage of its own accord.
And if my friendly and affectionate fate,
Out of his fearful and enormous being,
Will but prepare the joys of life for me —

COUNTESS.

Thou see'st it with a lovelorn maiden's eyes,
Cast thine eye round, bethink thee who thou art: —
Into no house of joyance hast thou stepped,
For no espousals dost thou find the walls
Decked out, no guests the nuptial garland wearing;
Here is no splendour but of arms. Or thinkest thou
That all these thousands are here congregated
To lead up the long dances at thy wedding!
Thou see'st thy father's forehead full of thought,
Thy mother's eye in tears: upon the balance
Lies the great destiny of all our house.
Leave now the puny wish, the girlish feeling;

Oh, thrust it far behind thee! Give thou proof
Thou'rt the daughter of the mighty — his
Who where he moves creates the wonderful.
Not to herself the woman must belong,
Annexed and bound to alien destinies.
But she performs the best part, she the wisest,
Who can transmute the alien into self,
Meet and disarm necessity by choice;
And what must be, take freely to her heart,
And bear and foster it with mother's love.

THEKLA.

Such ever was my lesson in the convent.
I had no loves, no wishes, knew myself
Only as his — his daughter — his, the mighty!
His fame, the echo of whose blast drove to me
From the far distance, weakened in my soul
No other thought than this — I am appointed
To offer myself up in passiveness to him.

COUNTESS.

That is thy fate. Mould thou thy wishes to it —
I and thy mother gave thee the example.

THEKLA.

My fate hath shown me him, to whom behoves it
That I should offer up myself. In gladness
Him will I follow.

COUNTESS.

Not thy fate hath shown him!
Thy heart, say rather — 'twas the heart, my child!

THEKLA.

Faith hath no voice but the heart's impulses.
I am all his! His present — his alone.

Is this new life, which lives in me ? He hath
A right to his own creature. What was I
Ere his fair love infused a soul into me ?

COUNTESS.

Thou wouldst oppose thy father, then, should he
Have otherwise determined with thy person ?

[THEKLA remains silent. The COUNTESS continues.
Thou meanest to force him to thy liking ? Child,
His name is Friedland.

THEKLA.

My name too is Friedland.
He shall have found a genuine daughter in me.

COUNTESS.

What ! he has vanquished all impediment,
And in the wilful mood of his own daughter
Shall a new struggle rise for him ? Child ! child !
As yet thou hast seen thy father's smiles alone ;
The eye of his rage thou hast not seen. Dear child,
I will not frighten thee. To that extreme,
I trust it ne'er shall come. His will is yet
Unknown to me ; 'tis possible his aims
May have the same direction as thy wish.
But this can never, never be his will,
That thou, the daughter of his haughty fortunes,
Shouldest e'er demean thee as a lovesick maiden
And like some poor cost-nothing, fling thyself
Toward the man, who, if that high prize ever
Be destined to await him, yet with sacrifices
The highest love can bring, must pay for it.

[Exit COUNTESS.

SCENE IX.

THEKLA (*who during the last speech had been standing evidently lost in her reflections*).

I thank thee for the hint. It turns
 My sad presentiment to certainty.
 And it is so! Not one friend have we here,
 Not one true heart! we've nothing but ourselves!
 Oh, she said rightly — no auspicious signs
 Beam on this covenant of our affections.
 This is no theatre where hope abides:
 The dull thick noise of war alone stirs here,
 And love himself, as he were armed in steel,
 Steps forth, and girds him for the strife of death.

[*Music from the banquet-room is heard.*]

There's a dark spirit walking in our house.
 And swiftly will the destiny close on us.
 It drove me hither from my calm asylum,
 It mocks my soul with charming witchery,
 It lures me forward in a seraph's shape,
 I see it near, I see it nearer floating,
 It draws, it pulls me with a god-like power —
 And lo! the abyss — and thither am I moving —
 I have no power within me not to move!

[*The music from the banquet-room becomes louder.*]

Oh, when a house is doomed in fire to perish,
 Many and dark Heaven drives his clouds together,
 Yea, shoots his lightnings down from sunny heights,
 Flames burst from out the subterraneous chasms,
 And fiends and angels, mingling in their fury,
 Sling firebrands at the burning edifice.¹ [*Exit THEKLA.*]

¹ There are few who will not have taste enough to laugh at the two concluding lines of this soliloquy: and still fewer, I would fain hope, who would not have been more disposed to shudder, had I given a *faithful* translation. For the readers of German I have added the original:

Blind wüthend schleudert selbst der Gott der Freude
 Den Pechkranz in das brennende Gebäude.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A large saloon lighted up with festal splendour ; in the midst of it, and in the centre of the stage, a table richly set out, at which eight generals are sitting, among whom are OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, TERZKY, and MARADAS. Right and left of this, but farther back, two other tables, at each of which six persons are placed. The middle door, which is standing open, gives to the prospect a fourth table with the same number of persons. More forward stands the sideboard. The whole front of the stage is kept open for the pages and servants-in-waiting. All is in motion. The band of music belonging to TERZKY'S regiment march across the stage, and draw up around the tables. Before they are quite off from the front of the stage, MAX. PICCOLOMINI appears, TERZKY advances toward him with a paper, ISOLANI comes up to meet him with a beaker, or service-cup.

TERZKY, ISOLANI, MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

ISOLANI.

Here, brother, what we love ! Why, where hast been ?
Off to thy place — quick ! Terzky here has given
The mother's holiday wine up to free booty.
Here it goes on as at the Heidelberg castle.
Already hast thou lost the best. They're giving
At yonder table ducal crowns in shares ;
There Sternberg's lands and chattels are put up,
With Eggenberg's, Stawata's, Lichtenstein's,
And all the great Bohemian feudalities.

Be nimble, lad ! and something may turn up
For thee, who knows ? off — to thy place ! quick ! march !

TIEFENBACH and GOETZ (*call out from the second and third tables*).

Count Piccolomini !

TERZKY.

Stop, ye shall have him in an instant. Read
This oath here, whether as 'tis here set forth,
The wording satisfies you. They've all read it,
Each in his turn, and each one will subscribe
His individual signature.

MAX. (*reads*).

"*Ingratis servire nefas.*"

ISOLANI.

That sounds to my ears very much like Latin,
And being interpreted, pray what may it mean ?

TERZKY.

No honest man will serve a thankless master.

MAX.

"Inasmuch as our supreme commander, the illustrious Duke of Friedland, in consequence of the manifold affronts and grievances which he has received, had expressed his determination to quit the emperor, but on our unanimous entreaty has graciously consented to remain still with the army, and not to part from us without our approbation thereof, so we, collectively and *each in particular*, in the stead of an oath personally taken, do hereby oblige ourselves — likewise by him honourably and faithfully to hold, and in nowise what-

soever from him to part, and to be ready to shed for his interests the last drop of our blood, so far, namely, as *our oath to the emperor will permit it.* (*These last words are repeated by ISOLANI.*) In testimony of which we subscribe our names."

TERZKY.

Now! are you willing to subscribe to this paper?

ISOLANI.

Why should he not? All officers of honour
Can do it, ay, must do it. Pen and ink here!

TERZKY.

Nay, let it rest till after meal.

ISOLANI (*drawing MAX. along*).

Come, Max. [*Both seat themselves at their table.*]

SCENE II.

TERZKY, NEUMANN.

TERZKY (*beckons to NEUMANN, who is waiting at the side-table and steps forward with him to the edge of the stage*).

Have you the copy with you, Neumann? Give it.
It may be changed for the other?

NEUMANN.

I have copied it
Letter by letter, line by line; no eye
Would e'er discover other difference,

Save only the omission of that clause,
According to your excellency's order.

TERZKY.

Right! lay it yonder and away with this —
It has performed its business — to the fire with it.

[NEUMANN *lays the copy on the table, and steps
back again to the side-table.*

SCENE III.

ILLO (*comes out from the second chamber*), TERZKY.

ILLO.

How goes it with young Piccolomini?

TERZKY.

All right, I think. He has started no object.

ILLO.

He is the only one I fear about —
He and his father. Have an eye on both.

TERZKY.

How looks it at your table: you forget not
To keep them warm and stirring?

ILLO.

Oh, quite cordial,
They are quite cordial in the scheme. We have them,
And 'tis as I predicted too. Already
It is the talk, not merely to maintain
The duke in station. "Since we're once for all
Together and unanimous, why not,"

Says Montecuculi, "ay, why not onward,
And make conditions with the emperor
There in his own Vienna?" Trust me, count,
Were it not for these said Piccolomini,
We might have spared ourselves the cheat.

TERZKY.

And Butler?

How goes it there? Hush!

SCENE IV.

To them enter BUTLER from a second table.

BUTLER.

Don't disturb yourselves;
Field-marshal, I have understood you perfectly.
Good luck be to the scheme; and as to me,
[*With an air of mystery.*]
You may depend upon me.

ILLO (*with vivacity*).

May we, Butler?

BUTLER.

With or without the clause, all one to me!
You understand me! My fidelity
The duke may put to any proof — I'm with him!
Tell him so! I'm the emperor's officer,
As long as 'tis his pleasure to remain
The emperor's general! and Friedland's servant,
As soon as it shall please him to become
His own lord.

TERZKY.

You would make a good exchange.
No stern economist, no Ferdinand,
Is he to whom you plight your services.

BUTLER (*with a haughty look*).

I do not put up my fidelity
To sale, Count Terzky! Half a year ago
I would not have advised you to have made me
An overture to that to which I now
Offer myself of my own free accord.
But that is past! and to the duke, field-marshal,
I bring myself, together with my regiment.
And mark you, 'tis my humour to believe,
The example which I give will not remain
Without an influence.

ILLO.

Who is ignorant,
That the whole army looks to Colonel Butler
As to a light that moves before them?

BUTLER.

Ay?

Then I repent me not of that fidelity
Which for the length of forty years I held,
If in my sixtieth year my good old name
Can purchase for me a revenge so full.
Start not at what I say, sir generals!
My real motives — they concern not you.
And you yourselves, I trust, could not expect
That this your game had crooked my judgment — or
That fickleness, quick blood, or such like cause,
Has driven the old man from the track of honour,
Which he so long had trodden. Come, my friends!
I'm not thereto determined with less firmness,

Because I know and have looked steadily
At that on which I have determined.

ILLO.

Say,
And speak roundly, what are we to deem you?

BUTLER.

A friend! I give you here my hand! I'm yours
With all I have. Not only men, but money
Will the duke want. Go, tell him, sirs!
I've earned and laid up somewhat in his service,
I lend it him; and is he my survivor,
It has been already long ago bequeathed to him;
He is my heir. For me, I stand alone
Here in the world; naught know I of the feeling
That binds the husband to a wife and children.
My name dies with me, my existence ends.

ILLO.

'Tis not your money that he needs — a heart
Like yours weighs tons of gold down, weighs down
millions!

BUTLER.

I came a simple soldier's boy from Ireland
To Prague — and with a master, whom I buried.
From lowest stable duty I climbed up,
Such was the fate of war, to this high rank,
The plaything of a whimsical good fortune.
And Wallenstein too is a child of luck:
I love a fortune that is like my own.

ILLO.

All powerful souls have kindred with each other.

BUTLER.

This is an awful moment! to the brave,
To the determined, an auspicious moment.
The Prince of Weimar arms, upon the Main,
To found a mighty dukedom. He of Halberstadt,
That Mansfeldt, wanted but a longer life
To have marked out with his good sword a lordship
That should reward his courage. Who of these
Equals our Friedland? There is nothing, nothing
So high, but he may set the ladder to it!

TERZKY.

That's spoken like a man!

BUTLER.

Do you secure the Spaniard and Italian —
I'll be your warrant for the Scotchman Lesly.
Come to the company!

TERZKY.

Where is the master of the cellar? Ho!
Let the best wines come up. Ho! cheerly, boy!
Luck comes to-day, so give her hearty welcome.
[*Exeunt, each to his table.*]

SCENE V.

*The MASTER OF THE CELLAR, advancing with NEUMANN,
SERVANTS passing backwards and forwards.*

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

The best wine! Oh, if my old mistress, his lady
mother, could but see these wild goings on she would
turn herself round in her grave. Yes, yes, sir officer!

'tis all down the hill with this noble house! no end, no moderation! And this marriage with the duke's sister, a splendid connection, a very splendid connection! but I will tell you, sir officer, it looks no good.

NEUMANN.

Heaven forbid! Why, at this very moment the whole prospect is in bud and blossom!

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

You think so? Well, well! much may be said on that head.

FIRST SERVANT (*comes*).

Burgundy for the fourth table.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

Now, sir lieutenant, if this ain't the seventieth flask —

FIRST SERVANT.

Why, the reason is, that German lord, Tiefenbach, sits at that table.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR (*continuing his discourse to NEUMANN*).

They are soaring too high. They would rival kings and electors in their pomp and splendour; and whenever the duke leaps, not a minute does my gracious master, the count, loiter on the brink — (*to the SERVANTS*). What do you stand there listening for? I will let you know you have legs presently. Off! see to the tables, see to the flasks! Look there! Count Palfi has an empty glass before him!

RUNNER (*comes*).

The great service-cup is wanted, sir, that rich gold cup with the Bohemian arms on it. The count says you know which it is.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

Ay! that was made for Frederick's coronation by the artist William — there was not such another prize in the whole booty at Prague.

RUNNER.

The same! — a health is to go round in him.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR (*shaking his head while he fetches and rinses the cups*).

This will be something for the tale-bearers — this goes to Vienna.

NEUMANN.

Permit me to look at it. Well, this is a cup indeed! How heavy! as well it may be, being all gold. And what neat things are embossed on it! how natural and elegant they look! There, on the first quarter, let me see. That proud amazon there on horseback, she that is taking a leap over the crosier and mitres, and carries on a wand a hat together with a banner, on which there's a goblet represented. Can you tell me what all this signifies?

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

The woman you see there on horseback is the Free Election of the Bohemian Crown. That is signified by the round hat and by that fiery steed on which she is riding. The hat is the pride of man; for he who cannot keep his hat on before kings and emperors is no free man.

NEUMANN.

But what is the cup there on the banner.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

The cup signifies the freedom of the Bohemian Church, as it was in our forefathers' times. Our forefathers in the wars of the Hussites forced from the Pope this noble privilege; for the Pope, you know, will not grant the cup to any layman. Your true Moravian values nothing beyond the cup; it is his costly jewel, and has cost the Bohemians their precious blood in many and many a battle.

NEUMANN.

And what says that chart that hangs in the air there, over it all?

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

That signifies the Bohemian letter-royal which we forced from the Emperor Rudolph — a precious, never to be enough valued parchment, that secures to the new church the old privileges of free ringing and open psalmody. But since he of Steiermark has ruled over us that is at an end; and after the battle at Prague, in which Count Palatine Frederick lost crown and empire, our faith hangs upon the pulpit and the altar — and our brethren look at their homes over their shoulders; but the letter-royal the emperor himself cut to pieces with his scissors.

NEUMANN.

Why, my good Master of the Cellar! you are deep read in the chronicles of your country.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

So were my forefathers, and for that reason were they minstrels, and served under Procopius and Ziska. Peace be with their ashes! Well, well! they fought for a good cause though. There! carry it up!

NEUMANN.

Stay! let me but look at this second quarter. Look *there!* That is, when at Prague Castle, the imperial counsellors, Martinitz and Stawata, were hurled down head over heels. 'Tis even so! there stands Count Thur who commands it.

[RUNNER *takes the service-cup and goes off with it.*

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

Oh, let me never more hear of that day. It was the three and twentieth of May in the year of our Lord one thousand six hundred and eighteen. It seems to me as it were but yesterday — from that unlucky day it all began, all the heartaches of the country. Since that day it is now sixteen years, and there has never once been peace on the earth.

[*Health drunk aloud at the second table.*

The Prince of Weimar! Hurrah!

[*At the third and fourth tables.*

Long live Prince William! Long live Duke Bernard! Hurrah!

[*Music strikes up.*

FIRST SERVANT.

Hear 'em! Hear 'em! What an uproar!

SECOND SERVANT (*comes in running*).

Did you hear? They have drunk the Prince of Weimar's health.

THIRD SERVANT.

The Swedish chief commander!

FIRST SERVANT (*speaking at the same time*).

The Lutheran!

SECOND SERVANT.

Just before, when Count Deodati gave out the emperor's health, they were all as mum as a nibbling mouse.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR.

Po, po! When the wine goes in strange things come out. A good servant hears, and hears not! You should be nothing but eyes and feet, except when you are called to.

SECOND SERVANT.

[*To the RUNNER, to whom he gives secretly a flask of wine, keeping his eye on the MASTER OF THE CELLAR, standing between him and the RUNNER.*]

Quick, Thomas! before the Master of the Cellar runs this way; 'tis a flask of Frontignac! Snapped it up at the third table. Canst go off with it?

RUNNER (*hides it in his pocket*).

All right!

[*Exit the SECOND SERVANT.*]

THIRD SERVANT (*aside to the FIRST*).

Be on the hark, Jack! that we may have right plenty to tell to Father Quivoga. He will give us right plenty of absolution in return for it.

FIRST SERVANT.

For that very purpose I am always having something to do behind Illo's chair. He is the man for speeches to make you stare with.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR (*to NEUMANN*).

Who, pray, may that swarthy man be, he with the cross, that is chatting so confidently with Esterhats?

NEUMANN.

Ay, he too is one of those to whom they confide too much. He calls himself Maradas; a Spaniard is he.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR (*impatiently*).

Spaniard! Spaniard! I tell you, friend, nothing good comes of those Spaniards. All these outlandish fellows are little better than rogues.

NEUMANN.

Fy, fy! you should not say so, friend. There are among them our very best generals, and those on whom the duke at this moment relies the most.

MASTER OF THE CELLAR (*Taking the flask out of the RUNNER'S pocket*).

My son, it will be broken to pieces in your pocket.

[TERZKY *hurries in, fetches away the paper, and calls to a servant for pen and ink, and goes to the back of the stage.*

MASTER OF THE CELLAR (*to the SERVANTS*).

The lieutenant-general stands up. Be on the watch. Now! They break up. Off, and move back the forms.

[*They rise at all the tables, the SERVANTS hurry off the front of the stage to the tables; part of the guests come forward.*

SCENE VI.

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI *enters, in conversation with MARADAS, and both place themselves quite on the edge of the stage on one side of the proscenium. On the side directly opposite, MAX. PICCOLOMINI, by himself, lost in thought, and taking no part in anything that is going forward. The middle space between both, but rather more distant from the edge of the stage, is filled up by BUTLER, ISOLANI, GOETZ, TIEFENBACH, and KOLATTO.*

ISOLANI (*while the company is coming forward*).

Good-night, good-night, Kolatto! Good-night, lieutenant-general! I should rather say good-morning.

GOETZ (*to TIEFENBACH*).

Noble brother! (*making the usual compliment after meals*).

TIEFENBACH.

Ay! 'twas a royal feast indeed.

GOETZ.

Yes, my lady countess understands these matters. Her mother-in-law, heaven rest her soul, taught her! Ah! that was a housewife for you!

TIEFENBACH.

There was not her like in all Bohemia for setting out a table.

OCTAVIO (*aside to MARADAS*).

Do me the favour to talk to me — talk of what you will — or of nothing. Only preserve the appearance

at least of talking. I would not wish to stand by myself, and yet I conjecture that there will be goings on here worthy of our attentive observation. (*He continues to fix his eye on the whole following scene.*)

ISOLANI (*on the point of going*).

Lights! lights!

TERZKY (*advances with the paper to ISOLANI*).

Noble brother; two minutes longer! Here is something to subscribe.

ISOLANI.

Subscribe as much as you like — but you must excuse me from reading it.

TERZKY.

There is no need. It is the oath which you have already read. Only a few marks of your pen!

[*ISOLANI hands over the paper to OCTAVIO respectfully.*]

TERZKY.

Nay, nay, first come, first served. There is no precedence here.

[*OCTAVIO runs over the paper with apparent indifference. TERZKY watches him at some distance.*]

GOETZ (*to TERZKY*).

Noble count! with your permission — good-night.

TERZKY.

Where's the hurry? Come, one other composing draught. (*To the SERVANTS.*) Ho!

GOETZ.

Excuse me — ain't able.

TERZKY.

A thimble-full !

GOETZ.

Excuse me.

TIEFENBACH (*sits down*).

Pardon me, nobles ! This standing does not agree with me.

TERZKY.

Consult your own convenience, general.

TIEFENBACH.

Clear at head, sound in stomach — only my legs won't carry me any longer.

ISOLANI (*pointing at his corpulence*).

Poor legs ! how should they ! Such an unmerciful load !

[OCTAVIO subscribes his name, and reaches over the paper to TERZKY, who gives it to ISOLANI ; and he goes to the table to sign his name.

TIEFENBACH.

'Twas that war in Pomerania that first brought it on. Out in all weathers — ice and snow — no help for it. I shall never get the better of it all the days of my life.

GOETZ.

Why, in simple verity, your Swedes make no nice inquiries about the season.

TERZKY (*observing ISOLANI, whose hand trembles excessively so that he can scarce direct his pen*).

Have you had that ugly complaint long, noble brother? Despatch it.

ISOLANI.

The sins of youth! I have already tried the chalybeate waters. Well — I must bear it.

[TERZKY *gives the paper to MARADAS; he steps to the table to subscribe.*

OCTAVIO (*advancing to BUTLER*).

You are not overfond of the orgies of Bacchus, colonel! I have observed it. You would, I think, find yourself more to your liking in the uproar of a battle than of a feast.

BUTLER.

I must confess 'tis not in my way.

OCTAVIO (*stepping nearer to him friendlily*).

Nor in mine neither, I can assure you; and I am not a little glad, my much-honoured Colonel Butler, that we agree so well in our opinions. A half-dozen good friends at most, at a small round table, a glass of genuine Tokay, open hearts, and a rational conversation — that's my taste.

BUTLER.

And mine, too, when it can be had.

[*The paper comes to TIEFENBACH, who glances over it at the same time with GOETZ and KOLATTO. MARADAS in the meantime returns to OCTAVIO. All this takes place, the conversation with BUTLER proceeding uninterrupted.*

OCTAVIO (*introducing MARADAS to BUTLER*).

Don Balthasar Maradas! likewise a man of our stamp, and long ago your admirer. [BUTLER bows.

OCTAVIO (*continuing*).

You are a stranger here — 'twas but yesterday you arrived — you are ignorant of the ways and means here. 'Tis a wretched place. I know at your age one loves to be snug and quiet. What if you move your lodgings? Come, be my visitor. (BUTLER *makes a low bow*.) Nay, without compliment! For a friend like you I have still a corner remaining.

BUTLER (*coldly*).

Your obliged humble servant, my lord lieutenant-general.

[*The paper comes to BUTLER, who goes to the table to subscribe it. The front of the stage is vacant, so that both the PICCOLOMINIS, each on the side where he had been from the commencement of the scene remain alone.*

OCTAVIO (*after having some time watched his son in silence, advances somewhat nearer to him*).

You were long absent from us, friend!

MAX.

I — urgent business detained me.

OCTAVIO.

And, I observe, you are still absent!

MAX.

You know this crowd and bustle always makes me silent.

OCTAVIO (*advancing still nearer*).

May I be permitted to ask what the business was that detained you? Terzky knows it without asking.

MAX.

What does Terzky know?

OCTAVIO.

He was the only one who did not miss you.

ISOLANI (*who has been attending to them for some distance steps up*).

Well done, father! Rout out his baggage! Beat up his quarters! there is something there that should not be.

TERZKY (*with the paper*).

Is there none wanting? Have the whole subscribed?

OCTAVIO.

All.

TERZKY (*calling aloud*).

Ho! Who subscribes?

BUTLER (*to TERZKY*).

Count the names. There ought to be just thirty.

TERZKY.

Here is a cross.

TIEFENBACH.

That's my mark!

ISOLANI.

He cannot write; but his cross is a good cross, and is honoured by Jews as well as Christians.

OCTAVIO (*presses on to MAX.*).

Come, general! let us go. It is late.

TERZKY.

One Piccolomini only has signed.

ISOLANI (*pointing to MAX.*).

Look! that is your man, that statue there, who has had neither eye, ear, nor tongue for us the whole evening.

[MAX. receives the paper from TERZKY, which he looks upon vacantly.

SCENE VII.

To these enter ILLO from the inner room. He has in his hand a golden service-cup, and is extremely distempered with drinking; GOETZ and BUTLER follow him, endeavouring to keep him back.

ILLO.

What do you want! Let me go.

GOETZ and BUTLER.

Drink no more, Illo! For heaven's sake, drink no more.

ILLO (*goes up to OCTAVIO and shakes him cordially by the hand, and then drinks.*)

Octavio! I bring this to you! Let all grudge be drowned in this friendly bowl! I know well enough

you never loved me — devil take me! and I never loved you! I am always even with people in that way! Let what's past be past — that is, you understand — forgotten! I esteem you infinitely. (*Embracing him repeatedly.*) You have not a dearer friend on earth than I, but that you know. The fellow that cries rogue to you calls me villain, and I'll strangle him! my dear friend!

TERZKY (*whispering to him*).

Art in thy senses? For heaven's sake, Illo, think where you are!

ILLO (*aloud*).

What do you mean? There are none but friends here, are there? (*Looks around the whole circle with a jolly and triumphant air.*) Not a sneaker amongst us, thank heaven!

TERZKY (*to BUTLER, eagerly*).

Take him off with you, force him off, I entreat you, Butler!

BUTLER (*to ILLO*).

Field-marshal! a word with you. (*Leads to the side-board.*)

ILLO (*cordially*).

A thousand for one. Fill; fill it once more up to the brim. To this gallant man's health!

ISOLANI (*to MAX. who all the while has been staring on the paper with fixed but vacant eyes*).

Slow and sure, my noble brother! Hast parsed it all yet? Some words yet to go through? Ha?

MAX. (*waking as from a dream*).

What am I to do?

TERZKY, and at the same time ISOLANI.

Sign your name.

[OCTAVIO directs his eyes on him with intense anxiety.

MAX. (*returns the paper*).

Let it stay till to-morrow. It is business; to-day I am not sufficiently collected. Send it to me to-morrow.

TERZKY.

Nay, collect yourself a little.

ISOLANI.

Awake man, awake! Come, thy signature, and have done with it! What! Thou art the youngest in the whole company, and would be wiser than all of us together! Look there! thy father has signed; we have all signed.

TERZKY (*to OCTAVIO*).

Use your influence. Instruct him.

OCTAVIO.

My son is at the age of discretion.

ILLO (*leaves the service-cup on the sideboard*).

What's the dispute?

TERZKY

He declines subscribing the paper.

MAX.

I say it may as well stay till to-morrow.

ILLO.

It cannot stay. We have all subscribed to it — and so must you. You must subscribe.

MAX.

Illo, good-night!

ILLO.

No! you come not off so! The duke shall learn who are his friends. [*All collect around ILLO and MAX.*]

MAX.

What my sentiments are toward the duke, the duke knows, every one knows — what need of this wild stuff?

ILLO.

This is the thanks the duke gets for his partiality to Italians and foreigners. Us Bohemians he holds for little better than dullards — nothing pleases him but what's outlandish.

TERZKY (*in extreme embarrassment, to the Commanders, who at ILLO'S words give a sudden start as preparing to resent them*).

It is the wine that speaks, and not his reason. Attend not to him, I entreat you.

ISOLANI (*with a bitter laugh*).

Wine invents nothing: it only tattles.

ILLO.

He who is not with me is against me. Your tender consciences! Unless they can slip out by a back-door, by a puny proviso —

TERZKY (*interrupting him*).

He is stark mad — don't listen to him!

ILLO (*raising his voice to the highest pitch*).

Unless they can slip out by a proviso. What of the proviso? The devil take this proviso!

MAX. (*has his attention roused, and looks again into the paper*).

What is there here then of such perilous import? You make me curious — I must look closer at it.

TERZKY (*in a low voice to ILLO*).

What are you doing, Illo? You are ruining us.

TIEFENBACH (*to KOLATTO*).

Ay, ay! I observed, that before we sat down to supper, it was read differently.

GOETZ.

Why, I seemed to think so too.

ISOLANI.

What do I care for that? Where there stand other names mine can stand too.

TIEFENBACH.

Before supper there was a certain proviso therein, or short clause, concerning our duties to the emperor.

BUTLER (*to one of the commanders*).

For shame, for shame! Bethink you. What is the main business here? The question now is, whether we shall keep our general, or let him retire. One must not take these things too nicely, and overscrupulously.

ISOLANI (*to one of the generals*).

Did the duke make any of these provisos when he gave you your regiment?

TERZKY (*to GOETZ*).

Or when he gave you the office of army-purveyancer, which brings you in yearly a thousand pistoles?

ILLO.

He is a rascal who makes us out to be rogues. If there be any one that wants satisfaction, let him say so, — I am his man.

TIEFENBACH.

Softly, softly! 'Twas but a word or two.

MAX. (*having read the paper gives it back*).

Till to-morrow therefore!

ILLO (*stammering with rage and fury, loses all command over himself and presents the paper to MAX. with one hand, and his sword in the other*).

Subscribe — Judas!

ISOLANI.

Out upon you, Illo!

OCTAVIO, TERZKY, BUTLER (*all together*).

Down with the sword!

MAX. (*rushes on him suddenly and disarms him, then to*
COUNT TERZKY).

Take him off to bed !

[MAX. *leaves the stage.* ILLO *cursing and raving*
is held back by some of the officers, and amidst
a universal confusion the curtain drops.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A Chamber in PICCOLOMINI'S Mansion. It is Night.

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI. *A VALET DE CHAMBRE with*
Lights.

OCTAVIO.

— And when my son comes in, conduct him hither.
What is the hour ?

VALET.

'Tis on the point of morning.

OCTAVIO.

Set down the light. We mean not to undress.
You may retire to sleep.

[*Exit VALET.* OCTAVIO *paces, musing, across the*
chamber ; MAX. PICCOLOMINI *enters unob-*
served, and looks at his father for some mo-
ments in silence.

MAX.

Art thou offended with me ? Heaven knows
That odious business was no fault of mine.
'Tis true, indeed, I saw thy signature ;

What thou hast sanctioned, should not, it might seem,
Have come amiss to me. But — tis my nature —
Thou know'st that in such matters I must follow
My own light, not another's.

OCTAVIO (*goes up to him and embraces him*).

Follow it,

Oh, follow it still further, my best son!
To-night, dear boy! it hath more faithfully
Guided thee than the example of thy father.

MAX.

Declare thyself less darkly.

OCTAVIO.

I will do so;

For after what has taken place this night,
There must remain no secrets 'twixt us two.

[*Both seat themselves*]

Max. Piccolomini! what thinkest thou of
The oath that was sent round for signatures?

MAX.

I hold it for a thing of harmless import,
Although I love not these set declarations.

OCTAVIO.

And on no other ground hast thou refused
The signature they fain had wrested from thee?

MAX.

It was a serious business. I was absent —
The affair itself seemed not so urgent to me.

OCTAVIO.

Be open, Max. Thou hadst then no suspicion?

MAX.

Suspicion! what suspicion? Not the least.

OCTAVIO.

Thank thy good angel, Piccolomini;
He drew thee back unconscious from the abyss.

MAX.

I know not what thou meanest.

OCTAVIO.

I will tell thee.
Fain would they have extorted from thee, son,
The sanction of thy name to villany;
Yes, with a single flourish of thy pen,
Made thee renounce thy duty and thy honour!

MAX. (*rises*).

Octavio!

OCTAVIO.

Patience! Seat yourself. Much yet
Hast thou to hear from me, friend! Hast for years
Lived in incomprehensible illusion.
Before thine eyes is treason drawing out
As black a web as e'er was spun for venom:
A power of hell o'erclouds thy understanding.
I dare no longer stand in silence — dare
No longer see thee wandering on in darkness,
Nor pluck the bandage from thine eyes.

MAX.

My father!

Yet, ere thou speakest, a moment's pause of thought!
If your disclosures should appear to be
Conjectures only — and almost I fear
They will be nothing further — spare them!
Am not in that collected mood at present,
That I could listen to them quietly.

OCTAVIO.

The deeper cause thou hast to hate this light,
The more impatient cause have I, my son,
To force it on thee. To the innocence
And wisdom of thy heart I could have trusted thee
With calm assurance — but I see the net
Preparing — and it is thy heart itself
Alarms me, for thine innocence — that secret
[*Fixing his eyes steadfastly on his son's face.*
Which thou concealest, forces mine from me.

[MAX. *attempts to answer, but hesitates, and casts
his eyes to the ground embarrassed.*

OCTAVIO (*after a pause*).

Know, then, they are duping thee! — a most foul game
With thee and with us all — nay, hear me calmly —
The duke even now is playing. He assumes
The mask, as if he would forsake the army;
And in this moment makes he preparations
That army from the emperor to steal,
And carry it over to the enemy!

MAX.

That low priest's legend I know well, but did not
Expect to hear it from thy mouth.

OCTAVIO.

That mouth,
From which thou hearest it at this present moment,
Doth warrant thee that it is no priest's legend.

MAX.

How mere a maniac they supposed the duke;
What, he can meditate? — the duke? — can dream
That he can lure away full thirty thousand
Tried troops and true, all honourable soldiers,
More than a thousand noblemen among them,
From oaths, from duty, from their honour lure them,
And make them all unanimous to do
A deed that brands them scoundrels?

OCTAVIO.

Such a deed,
With such a front of infamy, the duke
No way desires — what he requires of us
Bears a far gentler appellation. Nothing
He wishes but to give the empire peace.
And so, because the emperor hates this peace,
Therefore the duke — the duke will force him to it.
All parts of the empire will he pacify,
And for his trouble will retain in payment
(What he has already in his gripe) — Bohemia!

MAX.

Has he, Octavio, merited of us,
That we — that we should think so vilely of him?

OCTAVIO.

What would we think is not the question here,
The affair speaks for itself — and clearest proofs!
Hear me, my son — 'tis not unknown to thee,
In what ill credit with the court we stand.

But little dost thou know, or guess what tricks,
What base intrigues, what lying artifices,
Have been employed — for this sole end — to sow
Mutiny in the camp! All bands are loosed —
Loosed all the bands that link the officer
To his liege emperor, all that bind the soldier
Affectionately to the citizen.
Lawless he stands, and threateningly beleaguers
The state he's bound to guard. To such a height
'Tis swollen, that at this hour the emperor
Before his armies — his own armies — trembles;
Yea, in his capital, his palace, fears
The traitor's poniard, and is meditating
To hurry off and hide his tender offspring —
Not from the Swedes, not from the Lutherans — no,
From his own troops to hide and hurry them!

MAX.

Cease, cease! thou torturest, shatterest me. I know
That oft we tremble at an empty terror;
But the false phantasm brings a real misery.

OCTAVIO.

It is no phantasm. An intestine war,
Of all the most unnatural and cruel,
Will burst out into flames, if instantly
We do not fly and stifle it. The generals
Are many of them long ago won over;
The subalterns are vacillating; whole
Regiments and garrisons are vacillating.
To foreigners our strongholds are intrusted;
To that suspected Schafgotch is the whole
Force of Silesia given up: to Terzky
Five regiments, foot and horse; to Isolani,
To Illo, Kinsky, Butler, the best troops.

MAX.

Likewise to both of us.

OCTAVIO.

Because the duke
Believes he has secured us, means to lure us
Still further on by splendid promises.
To me he portions forth the principedoms, Glatz
And Sagan; and too plain I see the bait
With which he doubts not but to catch thee.

MAX.

No! no!

I tell thee, no!

OCTAVIO.

Oh, open yet thine eyes!
And to what purpose think'st thou he has called
Hither to Pilsen? to avail himself
Of our advice? Oh, when did Friedland ever
Need our advice? Be calm, and listen to me.
To sell ourselves are we called hither, and
Decline we that, to be his hostages.
Therefore doth noble Gallas stand aloof;
Thy father, too, thou wouldst not have seen here,
If higher duties had not held him fettered.

MAX.

He makes no secret of it — needs make none —
That we're called hither for his sake — he owns it.
He needs our aidance to maintain himself —
He did so much for us; and 'tis but fair
That we, too, should do somewhat now for him.

OCTAVIO.

And know'st thou what it is which we must do?
That Illo's drunken mood betrayed it to thee.

Bethink thyself, what hast thou heard, what seen ?
The counterfeited paper, the omission
Of that particular clause, so full of meaning,
Does it not prove that they would bind us down
To nothing good ?

MAX.

That counterfeited paper
Appears to me no other than a trick
Of Illo's own device. These underhand
Traders in great men's interests ever use
To urge and hurry all things to the extreme.
They see the duke at variance with the court,
And fondly think to serve him, when they widen
The breach irreparably. Trust me, father,
The duke knows nothing of all this.

OCTAVIO.

It grieves me
That I must dash to earth, that I must shatter
A faith so specious ; but I may not spare thee !
For this is not a time for tenderness.
Thou must take measures, speedy ones, must act.
I therefore will confess to thee that all
Which I've intrusted to thee now, that all
Which seems to thee so unbelievable,
That — yes, I will tell thee (*a pause*) MAX. ! I had it all
From his own mouth, from the duke's mouth I had it.

MAX (*in excessive agitation*).

No ! no ! never !

OCTAVIO.

Himself confided to me
What I, 'tis true, had long before discovered
By other means ; himself confided to me,
That 'twas his settled plan to join the Swedes ;

And, at the head of the united armies,
Compel the emperor —

MAX.

He is passionate,
The court has stung him; he is sore all over
With injuries and affronts; and in a moment
Of irritation, what if he, for once,
Forgot himself? He's an impetuous man.

OCTAVIO.

Nay, in cold blood he did confess this to me:
And having construed my astonishment
Into a scruple of his power, he showed me
His written evidences — showed me letters,
Both from the Saxon and the Swede, that gave
Promise of aidance, and defined the amount.

MAX.

It cannot be! — cannot be! cannot be!
Dost thou not see, it cannot!
Thou wouldst of necessity have shown him
Such horror, such deep loathing — that or he
Had taken thee for his better genius, or
Thou stood'st not now a living man before me.

OCTAVIO.

I have laid open my objections to him,
Dissuaded him with pressing earnestness;
But my *abhorrence*, the full sentiment
Of my *whole* heart — that I have still kept sacred
To my own consciousness.

MAX.

And *thou* hast been
So treacherous? That looks not like my father!

I trusted not thy words, when thou didst tell me
Evil of him; much less can I *now* do it,
That thou calumniatest thy own self.

OCTAVIO.

I did not thrust myself into his secrecy.

MAX.

Uprightness merited his confidence.

OCTAVIO.

He was no longer worthy of sincerity.

MAX.

Dissimulation, sure, was still less worthy
Of thee, Octavio!

OCTAVIO.

Gave I him a cause
To entertain a scruple of my honour?

MAX.

That he did not evince his confidence.

OCTAVIO.

Dear son, it is not always possible
Still to preserve that infant purity
Which the voice teaches in our inmost heart,
Still in alarm, for ever on the watch
Against the wiles of wicked men: e'en virtue
Will sometimes bear away her outward robes
Soiled in the wrestle with iniquity.
This is the curse of every evil deed
That, propagating still, it brings forth evil.
I do not cheat my better soul with sophisms;

I but perform my orders ; the emperor
Prescribes my conduct to me. Dearest boy,
Far better were it, doubtless, if we all
Obeyed the heart at all times ; but so doing,
In this our present sojourn with bad men,
We must abandon many an honest object.
'Tis now our call to serve the emperor ;
By what means he can best be served — the heart
May whisper what it will — this is our call !

MAX.

It seems a thing appointed, that to-day
I should not comprehend, nor understand thee.
The duke, thou sayest, did honestly pour out
His heart to thee, but for an evil purpose :
And thou dishonestly hast cheated him
For a good purpose ! Silence, I entreat thee —
My friend, thou stealest not from me —
Let me not lose my father !

OCTAVIO (*suppressing resentment*).

As yet thou knowest not all, my son. I have
Yet somewhat to disclose to thee. [*After a pause.*
Duke Friedland

Hath made his preparations. He relies
Upon the stars. He deems us unprovided,
And thinks to fall upon us by surprise.
Yea, in his dream of hope, he grasps already
The golden circle in his hand. He errs,
We, too, have been in action — he but grasps
His evil fate, most evil, most mysterious !

MAX.

Oh, nothing rash, my sire ! By all that's good,
Let me invoke thee — no precipitation !

OCTAVIO.

With light tread stole he on his evil way,
And light of tread hath vengeance stole on after him.
Unseen she stands already, dark behind him —
But one step more — he shudders in her grasp!
Thou hast seen Questenberg with me. As yet
Thou knowest but his ostensible commission:
He brought with him a private one, my son!
And that was for me only.

MAX.

May I know it?

OCTAVIO (*seizes the patent*).

Max.!

[*A pause.*]

— In this disclosure place I in thy hands
The empire's welfare and thy father's life.
Dear to thy inmost heart is Wallenstein:
A powerful tie of love, of veneration,
Hath knit thee to him from thy earliest youth.
Thou nourishest the wish, — O let me still
Anticipate thy loitering confidence!
The hope thou nourishest to knit thyself
Yet closer to him —

MAX.

Father —

OCTAVIO.

Oh, my son!

I trust thy heart undoubtingly. But am I
Equally sure of thy collectedness?
Wilt thou be able, with calm countenance,
To enter this man's presence, when that I
Have trusted to thee his whole fate?

MAX.

According
As thou dost trust me, father, with his crime.

[OCTAVIO takes a paper out of his escritoire and gives it to him.

MAX.

What! how! a full imperial patent!

OCTAVIO.

Read it.

MAX. (*just glances on it*).

Duke Friedland sentenced and condemned!

OCTAVIO.

Even so

MAX. (*throws down the paper*).

Oh, this is too much! O unhappy error!

OCTAVIO.

Read on. Collect thyself.

MAX. (*after he has read further, with a look of affright and astonishment on his father*).

How! what! Thou! thou!

OCTAVIO.

But for the present moment, till the King
Of Hungary may safely join the army,
Is the command assigned to me.

MAX.

And think'st thou,
Dost thou believe, that thou will tear it from him?
Oh, never hope it! Father! father! father!

An inauspicious office is enjoined thee.
This paper here! — this! and wilt thou enforce it?
The mighty in the middle of his host,
Surrounded by his thousands, him wouldst thou
Disarm — degrade! Thou art lost, both thou and all
of us.

OCTAVIO.

What hazard I incur thereby, I know.
In the great hand of God I stand. The Almighty
Will cover with his shield the imperial house,
And shatter, in his wrath, the work of darkness.
The emperor hath true servants still; and even
Here in the camp, there are enough brave men
Who for the good cause will fight gallantly.
The faithful have been warned — the dangerous
Are closely watched. I wait but the first step,
And then immediately —

MAX.

What! on suspicion?

Immediately?

OCTAVIO.

The emperor is no tyrant.
The deed alone he'll punish, not the wish.
The duke hath yet his destiny in his power.
Let him but leave the treason uncompleted,
He will be silently displaced from office,
And make way to his emperor's royal son.
An honourable exile to his castles
Will be a benefaction to him rather
Than punishment. But the first open step —

MAX.

What callest thou such a step? A wicked step
Ne'er will he take; but thou mightest easily,
Yea, thou hast done it, misinterpret him.

OCTAVIO.

Nay, howsoever punishable were
Duke Friedland's purposes, yet still the steps
Which he hath taken openly permit
A mild construction. It is my intention
To leave this paper wholly unenforced
Till some act is committed which convicts him
Of high treason, without doubt or plea,
And that shall sentence him.

MAX.

But who the judge?

OCTAVIO.

Thyself.

MAX.

For ever, then, this paper will lie idle.

OCTAVIO.

Too soon, I fear, its powers must all be proved.
After the counter-promise of this evening,
It cannot be but he must deem himself
Secure of the majority with us;
And of the army's general sentiment
He hath a pleasing proof in that petition,
Which thou delivered'st to him from the regiments.
Add this too — I have letters that the Rhinegrave
Hath changed his route, and travels by forced marches
To the Bohemian forests. What this purports
Remains unknown; and, to confirm suspicion,
This night a Swedish nobleman arrived here.

MAX.

I have thy word. Thou'lt not proceed to action
Before thou hast convinced me — me myself.

OCTAVIO.

Is it possible? Still, after all thou know'st,
Canst thou believe still in his innocence?

MAX. (*with enthusiasm*).

Thy judgment may mistake; my heart cannot.
[*Moderates his voice and manner.*

These reasons might expound thy spirit or mine;
But they expound not Friedland — I have faith:
For as he knits his fortunes to the stars,
Even so doth he resemble them in secret,
Wonderful, still inexplicable courses!
Trust me, they do him wrong. All will be solved.
These smokes at once will kindle into flame —
The edges of this black and stormy cloud
Will brighten suddenly, and we shall view
The unapproachable glide out in splendour.

OCTAVIO.

I will await it.

SCENE II.

OCTAVIO and MAX. *as before.* To them the VALET OF
THE CHAMBER.

OCTAVIO.

How now, then?

VALET.

A despatch is at the door.

OCTAVIO.

So early? From whom comes he then? Who is it?

VALET.

That he refused to tell me.

OCTAVIO.

Lead him in :

And, hark you — let it not transpire.

[*Exit VALET: the CORNET steps in.*]

OCTAVIO.

Ha ! cornet — is it you ; and from Count Gallas ?
Give me your letters.

CORNET.

The lieutenant-general
Trusted it not to letters.

OCTAVIO.

And what is it ?

CORNET.

He bade me tell you — Dare I speak openly here ?

OCTAVIO.

My son knows all.

CORNET.

We have him.

OCTAVIO.

Whom ?

CORNET.

The old negotiator.

Sesina,

OCTAVIO (*eagerly*).

And you have him ?

CORNET.

In the Bohemian Forest Captain Mohrbrand
Found and secured him yester-morning early.
He was proceeding then to Regensburg,
And on him were despatches for the Swede.

OCTAVIO.

And the despatches —

CORNET.

The lieutenant-general
Sent them that instant to Vienna, and
The prisoner with them.

OCTAVIO.

This is, indeed, a tidings !
That fellow is a precious casket to us,
Enclosing weighty things. Was much found on him ?

CORNET.

I think, six packets, with Count Terzky's arms.

OCTAVIO.

None in the duke's own hand ?

CORNET.

Not that I know.

OCTAVIO.

And old Sesina ?

CORNET.

He was sorely frightened,
When it was told him he must to Vienna;
But the Count Altringer bade him take heart,
Would he but make a full and free confession.

OCTAVIO.

Is Altringer then with your lord? I heard
That he lay sick at Linz.

CORNET.

These three days past
He's with my master, the lieutenant-general,
At Frauenburg. Already have they sixty
Small companies together, chosen men;
Respectfully they greet you with assurances,
That they are only waiting your commands.

OCTAVIO.

In a few days may great events take place.
And when must you return?

CORNET.

I wait your orders.

OCTAVIO.

Remain till evening.

[CORNET signifies his assent and obeisance, and is going.

No one saw you — ha?

CORNET.

No living creature. Through the cloister wicket
The Capuchins, as usual, let me in.

OCTAVIO.

Go, rest your limbs, and keep yourself concealed.
 I hold it probable that yet ere evening
 I shall despatch you. The development
 Of this affair approaches: ere the day,
 That even now is dawning in the heaven,
 Ere this eventful day hath set, the lot
 That must decide our fortunes will be drawn.

[Exit CORNET.]

SCENE III.

OCTAVIO and MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

OCTAVIO.

Well — and what now, son? All will soon be clear;
 For all, I'm certain, went through that Sesina.

MAX. (*who through the whole of the foregoing scene has
 been in a violent and visible struggle of feelings, at
 length starts as one resolved*).

I will procure me light a shorter way.
 Farewell.

OCTAVIO.

Where now? Remain here.

MAX.

To the Duke.

OCTAVIO (*alarmed*).

What —

MAX. (*returning*).

If thou hast believed that I shall act
 A part in this thy play, thou hast
 Miscalculated on me grievously.
 My way must be straight on. True with the tongue,

False with heart — I may not, cannot be :
 Nor can I suffer that a man should trust me —
 As his friend trust me — and then lull my conscience
 With such low pleas as these : “ I ask him not —
 He did it all at his own hazard — and
 My mouth has never lied to him.” No, no !
 What a friend takes me for, that I must be.
 I’ll to the duke ; ere yet this day is ended
 Will I demand of him that he do save
 His good name from the world, and with one stride
 Break through and rend this fine-spun web of yours.
 He can, he will ! I still am his believer,
 Yet I’ll not pledge myself, but that those letters
 May furnish you, perchance, with proofs against him.
 How far may not this Terzky have proceeded —
 What may not he himself too have permitted
 Himself to do, to snare the enemy,
 The laws of war excusing ? Nothing, save
 His own mouth shall convict him — nothing less !
 And face to face will I go question him.

OCTAVIO.

Thou wilt ?

MAX.

I will, as sure as this heart beats.

OCTAVIO.

I have, indeed, miscalculated on thee.
 I calculated on a prudent son,
 Who would have blessed the hand beneficent
 That plucked him back from the abyss — and lo !
 A fascinated being I discover,
 Whom his two eyes befool, whom passion wilders,
 Whom not the broadest light of noon can heal.
 Go, question him ! Be mad enough, I pray thee.
 The purpose of thy father, of thy emperor,

Go, give it up free booty! Force me, drive me
To an open breach before the time. And now,
Now that a miracle of heaven had guarded
My secret purpose even to this hour,
And laid to sleep suspicion's piercing eyes,
Let me have lived to see that mine own son,
With frantic enterprise, annihilates
My toilsome labours and state policy.

MAX.

Ay — this state policy! Oh, how I curse it!
You will sometime, with your state policy,
Compel him to the measure: it may happen,
Because ye are determined that he is guilty,
Guilty ye'll make him. All retreat cut off,
You close up every outlet, hem him in
Narrower and narrower, till at length ye force him —
Yes, ye, ye force him, in his desperation,
To set fire to his prison. Father! father!
That never can end well — it cannot — will not!
And let it be decided as it may,
I see with boding heart the near approach
Of an ill-starred, unblest catastrophe.
For this great monarch-spirit, if he fall,
Will drag a world into the ruin with him.
And as a ship that midway on the ocean
Takes fire, at once, and with a thunder-burst
Explodes, and with itself shoots out its crew
In smoke and ruin betwixt sea and heaven!
So will he, falling, draw down in his fall
All us, who're fixed and mortised to his fortune,
Deem of it what thou wilt; but pardon me,
That I must bear me on in my own way.
All must remain pure betwixt him and me;
And, ere the daylight dawns, it must be known
Which I must lose — my father or my friend.

[During his exit the curtain drops.]

The Death of Wallenstein

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

WALLENSTEIN, Duke of Friedland, Generalissimo of the
Imperial Forces in the Thirty Years' War.
DUCHESS OF FRIEDLAND, Wife of Wallenstein.
THEKLA, her Daughter, Princess of Friedland.
THE COUNTESS TERZKY, Sister of the Duchess.
LADY NEUBRUNN.
OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, Lieutenant-General.
MAX. PICCOLOMINI, his Son, Colonel of a Regiment of Cuirassiers.
COUNT TERZKY, the Commander of several Regiments, and
Brother-in-law of Wallenstein.
ILLO, Field-Marshal, Wallenstein's Confidant.
ISOLANI, General of the Croats.
BUTLER, an Irishman, Commander of a Regiment of Dragoons.
GORDON, Governor of Egra.
MAJOR GERALDIN.
CAPTAIN DEVEREUX.
CAPTAIN MACDONALD.
AN ADJUTANT.
NEUMANN, Captain of Cavalry, Aide-de-Camp to Terzky.
COLONEL WRANGEL, Envoy from the Swedes.
ROSENBERG, Master of Horse.
SWEDISH CAPTAIN.
SENI.*
BURGOMASTER of Egra.
ANSPESSADE, of the Cuirassiers.
GROOM OF THE CHAMBER, } Belonging to the Duke.
A PAGE, }
Cuirassiers, Dragoons, and Servants.

The Death of Wallenstein

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A room fitted up for astrological labours, and provided with celestial charts, with globes, telescopes, quadrants, and other mathematical instruments. Seven colossal figures, representing the planets, each with a transparent star of different colour on its head, stand in a semicircle in the background, so that Mars and Saturn are nearest the eye. The remainder of the scene and its disposition is given in the fourth scene of the second act. There must be a curtain over the figures, which may be dropped and conceal them on occasions.

[In the fifth scene of this act it must be dropped; but in the seventh scene it must be again drawn up wholly or in part.]

WALLENSTEIN *at a black table, on which a speculum astrologicum is described with chalk. SENI is taking observations through a window.*

WALLENSTEIN.

All well — and now let it be ended, Seni. Come, The dawn commences, and Mars rules the hour;

We must give o'er the operation. Come,
We know enough.

SENI.

Your highness must permit me
Just to contemplate Venus. She is now rising:
Like as a sun so shines she in the east.

WALLENSTEIN.

She is at present in her perigee,
And now shoots down her strongest influences.
[*Contemplating the figure on the table.*
Auspicious aspect! fateful in conjunction,
At length the mighty three corradiate;
And the two stars of blessing, Jupiter
And Venus, take between them the malignant
Slyly-malicious Mars, and thus compel
Into my service that old mischief-founder:
For long he viewed me hostilely, and ever
With beam oblique, or perpendicular,
Now in the Quartile, now in the Secundan,
Shot his red lightnings at my stars, disturbing
Their blessed influences and sweet aspects:
Now they have conquered the old enemy,
And bring him in the heavens a prisoner to me.

SENI (*who has come down from the window*).

And in a corner-house, your highness — think of that!
That makes each influence of double strength.

WALLENSTEIN.

And sun and moon, too, in the Sextile aspect,
The soft light with the vehement — so I love it.
Sol is the heart, Luna the head of heaven,
Bold be the plan, fiery the execution.

SENI.

And both the mighty Lumina by no
Maleficus affronted. Lo! Saturnus,
Innocuous, powerless, in *cadente Domo*.

WALLENSTEIN.

The empire of Saturnus is gone by;
Lord of the secret birth of things is he;
Within the lap of earth, and in the depths
Of the imagination dominates;
And his are all things that eschew the light.
The time is o'er of brooding and contrivance,
For Jupiter, the lustrous, lordeth now,
And the dark work, complete of preparation,
He draws by force into the realm of light.
Now must we hasten on to action, ere
The scheme, and most auspicious posture
Parts o'er my head, and takes once more its flight,
For the heaven's journey still, and adjourn not.

[*There are knocks at the door.*

There's some one knocking there. See who it is.

TERZKY (*from without*).

Open, and let me in.

WALLENSTEIN.

Ay — 'tis Terzky.

What is there of such urgency? We are busy.

TERZKY (*from without*).

Lay all aside at present, I entreat you;
It suffers no delaying.

WALLENSTEIN.

Open, Seni!

[*While SENI opens the door for TERZKY, WALLENSTEIN draws the curtain over the figures.*

SCENE II.

WALLENSTEIN, COUNT TERZKY.

TERZKY (*enters*).

Hast thou already heard it? He is taken.
Gallas has given him up to the emperor.

[SENI *draws off the black table and exit.*

WALLENSTEIN (*to TERZKY*).

Who has been taken? Who is given up?

TERZKY.

The man who knows our secrets, who knows every
Negotiation with the Swede and Saxon,
Through whose hands all and everything has passed —

WALLENSTEIN (*drawing back*).

Nay, not Sesina? Say, no! I entreat thee.

TERZKY.

All on his road for Regensburg to the Swede
He was plunged down upon by Gallas' agent,
Who had been long in ambush, lurking for him.
There must have been found on him my whole packet
To Thur, to Kinsky, to Oxenstiern, to Arnheim:
All this is in their hands: they have now an insight
Into the whole — our measures and our motives.

SCENE III.

To them enters ILLO.

ILLO (*to TERZKY*).

Has he heard it?

TERZKY.

He has heard it.

ILLO (*to WALLENSTEIN*).

Thinkest thou still

To make thy peace with the emperor, to regain
His confidence? E'en were it now thy wish
To abandon all thy plans, yet still they know
What thou hast wished : then forwards thou must press ;
Retreat is now no longer in thy power.

TERZKY.

They have documents against us, and in hands,
Which show beyond all power of contradiction —

WALLENSTEIN.

Of my handwriting — no iota. Thee
I punish, or thy lies.

ILLO.

And thou believest,
That what this man, and what thy sister's husband,
Did in thy name, will not stand on thy reckoning?
His word must pass for thy word with the Swede,
And not with those that hate thee at Vienna?

TERZKY.

In writing thou gavest nothing ; but bethink thee,
How far thou venturedst by word of mouth

With this Sesina! And will he be silent?
If he can save himself by yielding up
Thy secret purposes, will he retain them?

ILLO.

Thyself dost not conceive it possible;
And since they now have evidence authentic
How far thou hast already gone, speak! tell us,
What art thou waiting for? Thou canst no longer
Keep thy command; and beyond hope of rescue
Thou'rt lost if thou resign'st it.

WALLENSTEIN.

In the army
Lies my security. The army will not
Abandon me. Whatever they may know,
The power is mine, and they must gulp it down —
And if I give them caution for my fealty,
They must be satisfied, at least appear so.

ILLO.

The army, duke, *is* thine now; for this moment
'Tis thine: but think with terror on the slow,
The quiet power of time. From open violence
The attachment of thy soldiery secures thee
To-day, to-morrow: but grant'st thou them a respite,
Unheard, unseen, they'll undermine that love
On which thou now dost feel so firm a footing,
With wily theft will draw away from thee
One after the other —

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis a cursed accident!

ILLO.

Oh! I will call it a most blessed one,
If it work on thee as it ought to do,
Hurry thee on to action — to decision.
The Swedish general?

WALLENSTEIN.

He's arrived! Know'st thou
What his commission is —

ILLO.

To thee alone
Will he intrust the purpose of his coming.

WALLENSTEIN.

A cursed, cursed accident! Yes, yes,
Sesina knows too much, and won't be silent.

TERZKY.

He's a Bohemian fugitive and rebel,
His neck is forfeit. Can he save himself
At thy cost, think you he will scruple it?
And if they put him to the torture, will he,
Will he, that dastardling, have strength enough —

WALLENSTEIN (*lost in thought*).

Their confidence is lost, irreparably!
And I may act which way I will, I shall
Be and remain for ever in their thought
A traitor to my country. How sincerely
Soever I return back to my duty,
It will no longer help me —

ILLO.

Ruin thee,
That it will do! Not thy fidelity,
Thy weakness will be deemed the sole occasion —

WALLENSTEIN (*pacing up and down in extreme agitation*).

What! I must realise it now in earnest,
Because I toyed too freely with the thought!
Accursed he who dallies with a devil!
And must I — I must realise it now —
Now, while I have the power, it must take place!

ILLO.

Now — now — ere they can ward and parry it!

WALLENSTEIN (*looking at the paper of signatures*).

I have the generals' word — a written promise!
Max. Piccolomini stands not here — how's that?

TERZKY.

It was — he fancied —

ILLO.

Mere self-willedness.
There needed no such thing 'twixt him and you.

WALLENSTEIN.

He is quite right; there needed no such thing.
The regiments, too, deny to march for Flanders,
Have sent me in a paper of remonstrance,
And openly resist the imperial orders.
The first step to revolt's already taken.

ILLO.

Believe me, thou wilt find it far more easy
To lead them over to the enemy
Than to the Spaniard.

WALLENSTEIN.

I will hear, however,
What the Swede has to say to me.

ILLO (*eagerly to TERZKY*).

Go, call him,
He stands without the door in waiting.

WALLENSTEIN.

Stay!

Stay but a little. It hath taken me
All by surprise; it came too quick upon me;
'Tis wholly novel that an accident,
With its dark lordship, and blind agency,
Should force me on with it.

ILLO.

First hear him only,
And after weigh it. [*Exeunt TERZKY and ILLO.*]

SCENE IV.

WALLENSTEIN (*in soliloquy*).

Is it possible?
Is't so? I can no longer what I would?
No longer draw back at my liking? I
Must do the deed, because I thought of it?
And fed this heart here with a dream? Because
I did not scowl temptation from my presence,

Dallied with thoughts of possible fulfilment,
Commenced no movement, left all time uncertain,
And only kept the road, the access open?
By the great God of Heaven! it was not
My serious meaning, it was ne'er resolved.
I but amused myself with thinking of it.
The free-will tempted me, the power to do
Or not to do it. Was it criminal
To make the fancy minister to hope,
To fill the air with pretty toys of air,
And clutch fantastic sceptres moving toward me?
Was not the will kept free? Beheld I not
The road of duty close beside me — but
One little step, and once more I was in it!
Where am I? Whither have I been transported?
No road, no track behind me, but a wall,
Impenetrable, insurmountable,
Rises obedient to the spells I muttered
And meant not — my own doings tower behind me.
[Pauses and remains in deep thought]
A punishable man I seem, the guilt,
Try what I will, I cannot roll off from me;
The equivocal demeanour of my life
Bears witness on my prosecutor's party.
And even my purest acts from purest motives
Suspicion poisons with malicious gloss.
Were I that thing for which I pass, that traitor,
A goodly outside I had sure reserved,
Had drawn the coverings thick and double round me,
Been calm and chary of my utterance;
But being conscious of the innocence
Of my intent, my uncorrupted will,
I gave way to my humours, to my passion:
Bold were my words, because my deeds were not.
Now every planless measure, chance event,
The threat of rage, the vaunt of joy and triumph,
And all the May-games of a heart overflowing,

Will they connect, and weave them all together
Into one web of treason; all will be plan,
My eye ne'er absent from the far-off mark,
Step tracing step, each step a politic progress;
And out of all they'll fabricate a charge
So specious, that I must myself stand dumb.
I am caught in my own net, and only force,
Naught but a sudden rent can liberate me.

[*Pauses again.*

How else! since that the heart's unbiased instinct
Impelled me to the daring deed, which now
Necessity, self-preservation, *orders*.
Stern is the on-look of necessity,
Not without shudder may a human hand
Grasp the mysterious urn of destiny.
My deed was mine, remaining in my bosom;
Once suffered to escape from its safe corner
Within the heart, its nursery and birthplace,
Sent forth into the foreign, it belongs
For ever to those sly malicious powers
Whom never art of man conciliated.

[*Paces in agitation through the chamber, then
pauses, and, after the pause, breaks out again
into audible soliloquy.*

What is thy enterprise? thy aim? thy object?
Hast honestly confessed it to thyself?
Power seated on a quiet throne thou'dst shake,
Power on an ancient, consecrated throne,
Strong in possession, founded in all custom;
Power by a thousand tough and stringy roots
Fixed to the people's pious nursery faith.
This, this will be no strife of strength with strength.
That feared I not. I brave each combatant,
Whom I can look on, fixing eye to eye,
Who, full himself of courage, kindles courage
In me too. 'Tis a foe invisible
The which I fear — a fearful enemy,

Which in the human heart opposes me,
 By its coward fear alone made fearful to me.
 Not that, which full of life, instinct with power,
 Makes known its present being; that is not
 The true, the perilously formidable.
 O no! it is the common, the quite common,
 The thing of an eternal yesterday.
 Whatever was, and evermore returns,
 Sterling to-morrow, for to-day 'twas sterling!
 For of the wholly common is man made,
 And custom is his nurse! Woe then to them
 Who lay irreverent hands upon his old
 House furniture, the dear inheritance
 From his forefathers! For time consecrates;
 And what is gray with age becomes religion.
 Be in possession, and thou hast the right,
 And sacred will the many guard it for thee!

[*To the PAGE, who here enters.*

The Swedish officer? Well, let him enter.

[*The PAGE exit, WALLENSTEIN fixes his eye in deep thought on the door.*

Yet, it is pure — as yet! — the crime has come
 Not o'er this threshold yet — so slender is
 The boundary that divideth life's two paths.

SCENE V.

WALLENSTEIN and WRANGEL.

WALLENSTEIN (*after having fixed a searching look on him*).

Your name is Wrangel?

WRANGEL.

Gustave Wrangel, General
 Of the Sudermanian Blues.

WALLENSTEIN.

It was a Wrangel
Who injured me materially at Stralsund,
And by his brave resistance was the cause
Of the opposition which that seaport made.

WRANGEL.

It was the doing of the element
With which you fought, my lord ! and not my merit.
The Baltic Neptune did assert his freedom :
The sea and land, it seemed were not to serve
One and the same.

WALLENSTEIN.

You plucked the admiral's hat from off my head.

WRANGEL.

I come to place a diadem thereon.

WALLENSTEIN *makes the motion for him to take a seat,
and seats himself*).

And where are your credentials ?
Come you provided with full powers, sir general ?

WRANGEL.

There are so many scruples yet to solve —

WALLENSTEIN (*having read the credentials*).

An able letter ! Ay — he is a prudent,
Intelligent master whom you serve, sir general !
The chancellor writes me that he but fulfils
His late departed sovereign's own idea
In helping me to the Bohemian crown.

WRANGEL.

He says the truth. Our great king, now in heaven,
Did ever deem most highly of your grace's
Preëminent sense and military genius;
And always the commanding intellect,
He said, should have command, and be the king.

WALLENSTEIN.

Yes, he might say it safely. General Wrangel,
[*Taking his hand affectionately.*]
Come, fair and open. Trust me, I was always
A Swede at heart. Eh! that did you experience
Both in Silesia and at Nuremberg;
I had you often in my power, and let you
Always slip out by some back door or other.
'Tis this for which the court can ne'er forgive me,
Which drives me to this present step: and since
Our interests so run in one direction,
E'en let us have a thorough confidence
Each in the other.

WRANGEL.

Confidence will come
Has each but only first security.

WALLENSTEIN.

The chancellor still, I see, does not quite trust me;
And, I confess — the game does not lie wholly
To my advantage. Without doubt he thinks,
If I can play false with the emperor,
Who is my sovereign, I can do the like
With the enemy, and that the one, too, were
Sooner to be forgiven me than the other.
Is not this your opinion, too, sir general?

WRANGEL.

I have here a duty merely, no opinion.

WALLENSTEIN.

The emperor hath urged me to the uttermost:
I can no longer honourably serve him.
For my security, in self-defence,
I take this hard step, which my conscience blames.

WRANGEL.

That I believe. So far would no one go
Who was not forced to it. *[After a pause.*

What may have impelled
Your princely highness in this wise to act
Toward your sovereign lord and emperor,
Beseems not us to expound or criticise.
The Swede is fighting for his good old cause,
With his good sword and conscience. This concur-
rence,
This opportunity is in our favour,
And all advantages in war are lawful.
We take what offers without questioning;
And if all have its due and just proportions —

WALLENSTEIN.

Of what then are ye doubting? Of my will?
Or of my power? I pledged me to the chancellor,
Would he trust me with sixteen thousand men,
That I would instantly go over to them
With eighteen thousand of the emperor's troops.

WRANGEL.

Your grace is known to be a mighty war-chief,
To be a second Attila, and Pyrrhus.
'Tis talked of still with fresh astonishment,

How some years past, beyond all human faith,
You called an army forth like a creation :
But yet —

WALLENSTEIN.

But yet ?

WRANGEL.

But still the chancellor thinks
It might yet be an easier thing from nothing
To call forth sixty thousand men of battle,
Than to persuade one sixtieth part of them —

WALLENSTEIN.

What now ? Out with it, friend ?

WRANGEL.

To break their oaths.

WALLENSTEIN.

And he thinks so ? He judges like a Swede,
And like a Protestant. You Lutherans
Fight for your Bible. You are interested
About the cause ; and with your hearts you follow
Your banners. Among you whoe'er deserts
To the enemy hath broken covenant
With two lords at one time. We've no such fancies.

WRANGEL.

Great God in heaven ! Have then the people here
No house and home, no fireside, no altar ?

WALLENSTEIN.

I will explain that to you, how it stands :
The Austrian has a country, ay, and loves it,
And has good cause to love it — but this army
That calls itself the imperial, this that houses

Here in Bohemia, this has none — no country ;
This is an outcast of all foreign lands,
Unclaimed by town or tribe, to whom belongs
Nothing except the universal sun.
And this Bohemian land for which we fight
Loves not the master whom the chance of war,
Not its own choice or will, hath given to it.
Men murmur at the oppression of their conscience,
And power hath only awed but not appeased them.
A glowing and avenging memory lives
Of cruel deeds committed on these plains ;
How can the son forget that here his father
Was hunted by the bloodhound to the mass ?
A people thus oppressed must still be feared,
Whether they suffer or avenge their wrongs.

WRANGEL.

But then the nobles and the officers ?
Such a desertion, such a felony,
It is without example, my lord duke,
In the world's history.

WALLENSTEIN.

They are all mine —
Mine unconditionally — mine on all terms.
Not me, your own eyes you must trust.

[*He gives him the paper containing the written oath. WRANGEL reads it through, and, having read it, lays it on the table, remaining silent.*

So then ;

Now comprehend you ?

WRANGEL.

Comprehend who can !
My lord duke, I will let the mask drop — yes !

I've full powers for a final settlement.
 The Rhinegrave stands but four days' march from here
 With fifteen thousand men, and only waits
 For orders to proceed and join your army.
 These orders I give out immediately
 We're compromised.

WALLENSTEIN.

What asks the chancellor?

WRANGEL (*considerately*).

Twelve regiments, every man a Swede — my head
 The warranty — and all might prove at last
 Only false play —

WALLENSTEIN (*starting*).

Sir Swede!

WRANGEL (*calmly proceeding*).

Am therefore forced
 To insist thereon, that he do formally,
 Irrevocably break with the emperor,
 Else not a Swede is trusted to Duke Friedland.

WALLENSTEIN.

Come, brief and open! What is the demand?

WRANGEL.

That he forthwith disarm the Spanish regiments
 Attached to the emperor, that he seize on Prague,
 And to the Swedes give up that city, with
 The strong pass Egra.

WALLENSTEIN.

That is much indeed !

Prague ! — Egra's granted — but — but Prague.

'Twon't do.

I give you every security

Which you may ask of me in common reason —

But Prague — Bohemia — these, sir general,

I can myself protect.

WRANGEL.

We doubt it not.

But 'tis not the protection that is now

Our sole concern. We want security,

That we shall not expend our men and money

All to no purpose.

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis but reasonable.

WRANGEL.

And till we are indemnified, so long

Stays Prague in pledge.

WALLENSTEIN.

Then trust you us so little ?

WRANGEL (*rising*).

The Swede, if he would treat well with the German,

Must keep a sharp lookout. We have been called

Over the Baltic, we have saved the empire

From ruin — with our best blood have we sealed

The liberty of faith and gospel truth.

But now already is the benefaction

No longer felt, the load alone is felt.

Ye look askance with evil eye upon us,

As foreigners, intruders in the empire,

And would fain send us with some paltry sum
Of money, home again to our old forests.
No, no! my lord duke! it never was
For Judas' pay, for chinking gold and silver,
That we did leave our king by the Great Stone.¹
No, not for gold and silver have there bled
So many of our Swedish nobles — neither
Will we, with empty laurels for our payment,
Hoist sail for our own country. Citizens
Will we remain upon the soil, the which
Our monarch conquered for himself and died.

WALLENSTEIN.

Help to keep down the common enemy,
And the fair border land must needs be yours.

WRANGEL.

But when the common enemy lies vanquished,
Who knits together our new friendship then?
We know, Duke Friedland! though perhaps the Swede
Ought not to have known it, that you carry on
Secret negotiations with the Saxons.
Who is our warranty that we are not
The sacrifices in those articles
Which 'tis thought needful to conceal from us?

WALLENSTEIN (*rises*).

Think you of something better, Gustave Wrangel!
Of Prague no more.

WRANGEL.

Here my commission ends.

¹ A great stone near Lützen, since called the Swede's Stone, the body of their great king having been found at the foot of it, after the battle in which he lost his life.

WALLENSTEIN.

Surrender up to you my capital!
Far liever would I force about, and step
Back to my emperor.

WRANGEL.

If time yet permits —

WALLENSTEIN.

That lies with me, even now, at any hour.

WRANGEL.

Some days ago, perhaps. To-day, no longer;
No longer since Sesina's been a prisoner.

[WALLENSTEIN *is struck, and silenced.*]

My lord duke, hear me — we believe that you
At present do mean honourably by us.
Since yesterday we're sure of that — and now
This paper warrants for the troops, there's nothing
Stands in the way of our full confidence.
Prague shall not part us. Hear! The chancellor
Contents himself with Alstadt; to your grace
He gives up Ratschin and the narrow side.
But Egra above all must open to us,
Ere we can think of any junction.

WALLENSTEIN.

You,

You therefore must I trust, and not you me?
I will consider of your proposition.

WRANGEL.

I must entreat that your consideration
Occupy not too long a time. Already
Has this negotiation, my lord duke!

Crept on into the second year. If nothing
Is settled this time, will the chancellor
Consider it as broken off for ever!

WALLENSTEIN.

Ye press me hard. A measure such as this
Ought to be thought of.

WRANGEL.

Ay! but think of this too,
That sudden action only can procure it.
Success — think first of this, your highness.

[*Exit* WRANGEL.]

SCENE VI.

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY, and ILLO (*re-enter*).

ILLO.

Is't all right?

TERZKY.

Are you compromised?

ILLO.

This Swede
Went smiling from you. Yes! you're compromised.

WALLENSTEIN.

As yet is nothing settled; and (well weighed)
I feel myself inclined to leave it so.

TERZKY.

How? What is that?

WALLENSTEIN.

Come on me what will come,
The doing evil to avoid an evil
Cannot be good!

TERZKY.

Nay, but bethink you, duke.

WALLENSTEIN.

To live upon the mercy of these Swedes!
Of these proud-hearted Swedes! — I could not bear it.

ILLO.

Goest thou as fugitive, as mendicant?
Bringest thou not more to them than thou receivest?

WALLENSTEIN.

How fared it with the brave and royal Bourbon
Who sold himself unto his country's foes,
And pierced the bosom of his fatherland?
Curses were his reward, and men's abhorrence
Avenged the unnatural and revolting deed.

ILLO.

Is that thy case?

WALLENSTEIN.

True faith, I tell thee,
Must ever be the dearest friend of man:
His nature prompts him to assert its rights.
The enmity of sects, the rage of parties,
Long-cherished envy, jealousy, unite;
And all the struggling elements of evil
Suspend their conflict, and together league
In one alliance 'gainst their common foe —
The savage beast that breaks into the fold,

Where men repose in confidence and peace.
For vain were man's own prudence to protect him.
'Tis only in the forehead nature plants
The watchful eye; the back, without defence,
Must find its shield in man's fidelity.

TERZKY.

Think not more meanly of thyself than do
Thy foes, who stretch their hands with joy to greet thee.
Less scrupulous far was the imperial Charles,
The powerful head of this illustrious house;
With open arms he gave the Bourbon welcome;
For still by policy the world is ruled.

SCENE VII.

To these enter the COUNTESS TERZKY.

WALLENSTEIN.

Who sent for you? There is no business here
For women.

COUNTESS.

I am come to bid you joy.

WALLENSTEIN.

Use thy authority, Terzky; bid her go.

COUNTESS.

Come I perhaps too early? I hope not.

WALLENSTEIN.

Set not this tongue upon me, I entreat you:
You know it is the weapon that destroys me.

I am routed, if a woman but attack me:
I cannot traffic in the trade of words
With that unreasoning sex.

COUNTESS.

I had already
Given the Bohemians a king.

WALLENSTEIN (*sarcastically*).

They have one,
In consequence, no doubt.

COUNTESS (*to the others*).

Ha! what new scruple?

TERZKY.

The duke will not.

COUNTESS.

He will not what he must!

ILLO.

It lies with you now. Try. For I am silenced
When folks begin to talk to me of conscience
And of fidelity.

COUNTESS.

How? then, when all
Lay in the far-off distance, when the road
Stretched out before thine eyes interminably,
Then hadst thou courage and resolve; and now,
Now that the dream is being realised,
The purpose ripe, the issue ascertained,
Dost thou begin to play the dastard now?
Planned merely, 'tis a common felony;
Accomplished, an immortal undertaking:

And with success comes pardon hand in hand,
For all event is God's arbitrament.

SERVANT (*enters*).

The Colonel Piccolomini.

COUNTESS (*hastily*).

— Must wait.

WALLENSTEIN.

I cannot see him now. Another time.

SERVANT.

But for two minutes he entreats an audience:
Of the most urgent nature is his business.

WALLENSTEIN.

Who knows what he may bring us! I will hear him.

COUNTESS (*laughs*).

Urgent for him, no doubt? but thou may'st wait.

WALLENSTEIN.

What is it?

COUNTESS.

Thou shalt be informed hereafter.
First let the Swede and thee be compromised.

[*Exit* SERVANT.]

WALLENSTEIN.

If there were yet a choice! if yet some milder
Way of escape were possible — I still
Will choose it, and avoid the last extreme.

COUNTESS.

Desirest thou nothing further? Such a way
Lies still before thee. Send this Wrangel off.
Forget thou thy old hopes, cast far away
All thy past life; determine to commence
A new one. Virtue hath her heroes too,
As well as fame and fortune. To Vienna
Hence — to the emperor — kneel before the throne;
Take a full coffer with thee — say aloud,
Thou didst but wish to prove thy fealty;
Thy whole intention but to dupe the Swede.

ILLO.

For that too 'tis too late. They know too much;
He would but bear his own head to the block.

COUNTESS.

I fear not that. They have no evidence
To attain him legally, and they avoid
The avowal of an arbitrary power.
They'll let the duke resign without disturbance.
I see how all will end. The King of Hungary
Makes his appearance, and 'twill of itself
Be understood, and then the duke retires.
There will not want a formal declaration.
The young king will administer the oath
To the whole army; and so all returns
To the old position. On some morrow morning
The duke departs; and now 'tis stir and bustle
Within his castles. He will hunt and build;
Superintend his horses' pedigrees,
Creates himself a court, gives golden keys,
And introduceth strictest ceremony
In fine proportions, and nice etiquette;
Keeps open table with high cheer: in brief,
Commenceth mighty king — in miniature.

And while he prudently demeans himself,
 And gives himself no actual importance,
 He will be let appear whate'er he likes :
 And who dares doubt, that Friedland will appear
 A mighty prince to his last dying hour ?
 Well now, what then ? Duke Friedland is as others,
 A fire-new noble, whom the war hath raised
 To price and currency, a Jonah's gourd,
 An overnight creation of court-favour,
 Which, with an undistinguishable ease,
 Makes baron or makes prince.

WALLENSTEIN (*in extreme agitation*).

Take her away.

Let in the young Count Piccolomini.

COUNTESS.

Art thou in earnest ? I entreat thee ! Canst thou
 Consent to bear thyself to thy own grave,
 So ignominiously to be dried up ?
 Thy life, that arrogated such an height,
 To end in such a nothing ! To be nothing,
 When one was always nothing, is an evil
 That asks no stretch of patience, a light evil ;
 But to become a nothing, having been —

WALLENSTEIN (*starts up in violent agitation*).

Show me a way out of this stifling crowd,
 Ye powers of aidance ! Show me such a way
 As I am capable of going. I
 Am no tongue-hero, no fine virtue-prattler ;
 I cannot warm by thinking ; cannot say
 To the good luck that turns her back upon me
 Magnanimously : " Go ; I need thee not."
 Cease I to work, I am annihilated.
 Dangers nor sacrifices will I shun,

If so I may avoid the last extreme ;
 But ere I sink down into nothingness,
 Leave off so little, who began so great,
 Ere that the world confuses me with those
 Poor wretches, whom a day creates and crumbles,
 This age and after ages ¹ speak my name
 With hate and dread ; and Friedland be redemption
 For each accursed deed.

COUNTESS.

What is there here, then,
 So against nature ? Help me to perceive it !
 Oh, let not superstition's nightly goblins
 Subdue thy clear, bright spirit ! Art thou bid
 To murder ? with abhorred, accursed poniard,
 To violate the breasts that nourish thee ?
 That were against our nature, that might aptly
 Make thy flesh shudder, and thy whole heart sicken.²
 Yet not a few, and for a meaner object,
 Have ventured even this, ay, and performed it.
 What is there in thy case so black and monstrous ?
 Thou art accused of treason — whether with
 Or without justice is not now the question —
 Thou art lost if thou dost not avail thee quickly
 Of the power which thou possessest — Friedland !
 Duke !

Tell me where lives that thing so meek and tame,
 That doth not all his living faculties
 Put forth in preservation of his life ?

¹ Could I have hazarded such a Germanism as the use of the word afterworld for posterity, "Es spreche Welt und *Nachwelt* meinen Namen" might have been rendered with more literal fidelity : Let world and afterworld speak out my name, etc.

² I have not ventured to affront the fastidious delicacy of our age with a literal translation of this line, —

werth
 Die Eingeweide schauernd aufzuregen.

What deed so daring, which necessity
And desperation will not sanctify ?

WALLENSTEIN.

Once was this Ferdinand so gracious to me ;
He loved me ; he esteemed me ; I was placed
The nearest to his heart. Full many a time
We like familiar friends, both at one table,
Have banqueted together — he and I ;
And the young kings themselves held me the basin
Wherewith to wash me — and is't come to this ?

COUNTESS.

So faithfully preservest thou each small favour,
And hast no memory for contumelies ?
Must I remind thee, how at Regensburg
This man repaid thy faithful services ?
All ranks and all conditions in the empire
Thou hadst wronged to make him great, — hadst loaded
on thee,
On thee, the hate, the curse of the whole world.
No friend existed for thee in all Germany,
And why ? because thou hadst existed only
For the emperor. To the emperor alone
Clung Friedland in that storm which gathered round him
At Regensburg in the Diet — and he dropped thee !
He let thee fall ! he let thee fall a victim
To the Bavarian, to that insolent !
Deposed, stripped bare of all thy dignity
And power, amid the taunting of thy foe
Thou wert let drop into obscurity.
Say not, the restoration of thy honour
Has made atonement for that first injustice.
No honest good-will was it that replaced thee ;
The law of hard necessity replaced thee,
Which they had fain opposed, but that they could not.

WALLENSTEIN.

Not to their good wishes, that is certain,
Nor yet to his affection I'm indebted
For this high office; and if I abuse it,
I shall therein abuse no confidence.

COUNTESS.

Affection! confidence! — they needed thee.
Necessity, impetuous remonstrant!
Who not with empty names, or shows of proxy,
Is served, who'll have the thing and not the symbol,
Ever seeks out the greatest and the best,
And at the rudder places him, e'en though
She had been forced to take him from the rabble —
She, this necessity, it was that placed thee
In this high office; it was she that gave thee
Thy letters-patent of inauguration.
For, to the uttermost moment that they can,
This race still help themselves at cheapest rate
With slavish souls, with puppets! At the approach
Of extreme peril, when a hollow image
Is found a hollow image and no more,
Then falls the power into the mighty hands
Of nature, of the spirit-giant born,
Who listens only to himself, knows nothing
Of stipulations, duties, reverences,
And, like the emancipated force of fire,
Unmastered scorches, ere it reaches them,
Their fine-spun webs, their artificial policy.

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis true! they saw me always as I am —
Always! I did not cheat them in the bargain.
I never held it worth my pains to hide
The bold all-grasping habit of my soul.

COUNTESS.

Nay rather — thou hast ever shown thyself
A formidable man, without restraint;
Hast exercised the full prerogatives
Of thy impetuous nature, which had been
Once granted to thee. Therefore, duke, not thou,
Who hast still remained consistent with thyself,
But they are in the wrong, who, fearing thee,
Intrusted such a power in hands they feared.
For, by the laws of spirit, in the right
Is every individual character
That acts in strict consistence with itself:
Self-contradiction is the only wrong.
Wert thou another being, then, when thou
Eight years ago pursuedst thy march with fire,
And sword, and desolation, through the circles
Of Germany, the universal scourge,
Didst mock all ordinances of the empire,
The fearful rights of strength alone exertedst,
Trampledst to earth each rank, each magistracy,
All to extend thy Sultan's domination?
Then was the time to break thee in, to curb
Thy haughty will, to teach thee ordinance.
But no, the emperor felt no touch of conscience;
What served him pleased him, and without a murmur
He stamped his broad seal on these lawless deeds.
What at that time was right, because thou didst it
For him, to-day is all at once become
Opprobrious, foul, because it is directed
Against him. O most flimsy superstition!

WALLENSTEIN (*rising*).

I never saw it in this light before,
'Tis even so. The emperor perpetrated
Deeds through my arm, deeds most unorderedly.
And even this prince's mantle, which I wear,

I owe to what were services to him,
But most high misdemeanours 'gainst the empire.

COUNTESS.

Then betwixt thee and him (confess it, Friedland!)
The point can be no more of right and duty,
Only of power and the opportunity.
That opportunity, lo! it comes yonder
Approaching with swift steeds; then with a swing
Throw thyself up into the chariot-seat,
Seize with firm hand the reins ere thy opponent
Anticipate thee, and himself make conquest
Of the now empty seat. The moment comes;
It is already here, when thou must write
The absolute total of thy life's vast sum.
The constellations stand victorious o'er thee,
The planets shoot good fortune in fair junctions,
And tell thee, "Now's the time!" The starry courses
Hast thou thy life long measured to no purpose?
The quadrant and the circle, were they playthings?

[Pointing to the different objects in the room.]

The zodiacs, the rolling orbs of heaven,
Hast pictured on these walls and all around thee.
In dumb, foreboding symbols hast thou placed
These seven presiding lords of destiny —
For toys? Is all this preparation nothing?
Is there no marrow in this hollow art,
That even to thyself it doth avail
Nothing, and has no influence over thee
In the great moment of decision?

WALLENSTEIN (*during this last speech walks up and down with inward struggles, labouring with passion; stops suddenly, stands still, then interrupting the COUNTESS*).

Send Wrangel to me — I will instantly
Despatch three couriers —

ILLO (*hurrying out*).

God in heaven be praised !

WALLENSTEIN.

It is his evil genius and mine.
 Our evil genius ! It chastises him
 Through me, the instrument of his ambition ;
 And I expect no less, than that revenge
 E'en now is whetting for my breast the poniard.
 Who sows the serpent's teeth let him not hope
 To reap a joyous harvest. Every crime
 Has, in the moment of its perpetration,
 Its own avenging angel — dark misgiving,
 An ominous sinking at the inmost heart.
 He can no longer trust me. Then no longer
 Can I retreat — so come that which must come.
 Still destiny preserves its due relations,
 The heart within us is its absolute
 Vicegerent.

[*To TERZKY.*

Go, conduct you Gustave Wrangel
 To my state cabinet. Myself will speak to
 The couriers. And despatch immediately
 A servant for Octavio Piccolomini.

[*To the COUNTESS, who cannot conceal her triumph.*
 No exultation ! woman, triumph not !
 For jealous are the powers of destiny,
 Joy premature, and shouts ere victory,
 Encroach upon their rights and privileges.
 We sow the seed, and they the growth determine.

[*While he is making his exit the curtain drops.*

ACT II

SCENE I.

Scene as in the preceding Act.

WALLENSTEIN, OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI.

WALLENSTEIN (*coming forward in conversation*).

He sends me word from Linz that he lies sick ;
But I have sure intelligence that he
Secretes himself at Frauenberg with Gallas.
Secure them both, and send them to me hither.
Remember, thou takest on thee the command
Of those same Spanish regiments, — constantly
Make preparation, and be never ready ;
And if they urge thee to draw out against me,
Still answer yes, and stand as thou wert fettered.
I know that it is doing thee a service
To keep thee out of action in this business.
Thou lovest to linger on in fair appearances ;
Steps of extremity are not thy province,
Therefore have I sought out this part for thee.
Thou wilt this time be of most service to me
By thy inertness. The meantime, if fortune
Declare itself on my side, thou wilt know
What is to do. [*Enter MAX. PICCOLOMINI*

Now go, Octavio.

This night must thou be off, take my own horses :
Him here I keep with me — make short farewell —
Trust me, I think we all shall meet again
In joy and thriving fortunes.

OCTAVIO (*to his son*).

I shall see you

Yet ere I go.

SCENE II.

WALLENSTEIN, MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

MAX. (*advances to him*).

My general!

WALLENSTEIN.

That I am no longer, if
Thou stylest thyself the emperor's officer.

MAX.

Then thou wilt leave the army, general?

WALLENSTEIN.

I have renounced the service of the emperor.

MAX.

And thou wilt leave the army?

WALLENSTEIN.

Rather hope I
To bind it nearer still and faster to me.

[He seats himself.]

Yes, Max., I have delayed to open it to thee,
Even till the hour of acting 'gins to strike.
Youth's fortunate feeling doth seize easily
The absolute right, yea, and a joy it is
To exercise the single apprehension
Where the sums square in proof;
But where it happens, that of two sure evils
One must be taken, where the heart not wholly
Brings itself back from out the strife of duties,
There 'tis a blessing to have no election,
And blank necessity is grace and favour.

This is now present: do not look behind thee, —
It can no more avail thee. Look thou forwards!
Think not! judge not! prepare thyself to act!
The court — it hath determined on my ruin,
Therefore I will be beforehand with them.
We'll join the Swedes — right gallant fellows are they,
And our good friends.

[*He stops himself, expecting PICCOLOMINI'S answer.*
I have taken thee by surprise. Answer me not:
I grant thee time to recollect thyself.

[*He rises, retires to the back of the stage. MAX.
remains for a long time motionless, in a
trance of excessive anguish. At his first
motion WALLENSTEIN returns, and places
himself before him.*

MAX.

My general, this day thou makest me
Of age to speak in my own right and person,
For till this day I have been spared the trouble
To find out my own road. Thee have I followed
With most implicit, unconditional faith,
Sure of the right path if I followed thee.
To-day, for the first time, dost thou refer
Me to myself, and forcest me to make
Election between thee and my own heart.

WALLENSTEIN.

Soft cradled thee thy fortune till to-day;
Thy duties thou couldst exercise in sport,
Indulge all lovely instincts, act for ever
With undivided heart. It can remain
No longer thus. Like enemies, the roads
Start from each other. Duties strive with duties,
Thou must needs choose thy party in the war

Which is now kindling 'twixt thy friend and him
Who is thy emperor.

MAX.

War! is that the name?
War is as frightful as heaven's pestilence,
Yet it is good, is it heaven's will as that is.
Is that a good war, which against the emperor
Thou wagest with the emperor's own army?
O God of heaven! what a change is this.
Beseems it me to offer such persuasion
To thee, who like the fixed star of the pole
Wert all I gazed at on life's trackless ocean?
O! what a rent thou makest in my heart!
The ingrained instinct of old reverence,
The holy habit of obedience,
Must I pluck life asunder from thy name?
Nay, do not turn thy countenance upon me —
It always was as a god looking upon me!
Duke Wallenstein, its power has not departed;
The senses still are in thy bonds, although
Bleeding, the soul hath freed itself.

WALLENSTEIN.

Max., hear me.

MAX.

Oh, do it not, I pray thee, do it not!
There is a pure and noble soul within thee,
Knows not of this unblest unlucky doing.
Thy will is chaste, it is thy fancy only
Which hath polluted thee — and innocence,
It will not let itself be driven away
From that world-awing aspect. Thou wilt not,
Thou canst not end in this. It would reduce
All human creatures to disloyalty
Against the nobleness of their own nature.

'Twill justify the vulgar misbelief,
Which holdeth nothing noble in free will,
And trusts itself to impotence alone,
Made powerful only in an unknown power.

WALLENSTEIN.

The world will judge me harshly, I expect it.
Already have I said to my own self
All thou canst say to me. Who but avoids
The extreme, can he by going round avoid it ?
But here there is no choice. Yes, I must use
Or suffer violence — so stands the case ;
There remains nothing possible but that.

MAX.

Oh, that is never possible for thee !
'Tis the last desperate resource of those
Cheap souls, to whom their honour, their good name,
Is their poor saving, their last worthless keep,
Which, having staked and lost, they staked themselves
In the mad rage of gaming. Thou art rich
And glorious ; with an unpolluted heart
Thou canst make conquest of whate'er seems highest !
But he who once hath acted infamy
Does nothing more in this world.

WALLENSTEIN (*grasps his hand*).

Calmly, Max. !

Much that is great and excellent will we
Perform together yet. And if we only
Stand on the height with dignity, 'tis soon
Forgotten, Max., by what road we ascended.
Believe me, many a crown shines spotless now,
That yet was deeply sullied in the winning.
To the evil spirit doth the earth belong,
Not to the good. All that the powers divine

Send from above are universal blessings :
Their light rejoices us, their air refreshes,
But never yet was man enriched by them :
In their eternal realm no property
Is to be struggled for — all there is general.
The jewel, the all-valued gold we win
From the deceiving powers, depraved in nature,
That dwell beneath the day and blessed sunlight.
Not without sacrifices are they rendered
Propitious, and there lives no soul on earth
That e'er retired unsullied from their service.

MAX.

Whate'er is human to the human being
Do I allow — and to the vehement
And striving spirit readily I pardon
The excess of action ; but to thee, my general !
Above all others make I large concession.
For thou must move a world and be the master —
He kills thee who condemns thee to inaction.
So be it then ! maintain thee in thy post
By violence. Resist the emperor,
And if it must be force with force repel ;
I will not praise it, yet I can forgive it.
But not — not to the traitor — yes ! the word
Is spoken out —
Not to the traitor can I yield a pardon.
That is no mere excess ! that is no error
Of human nature — that is wholly different.
Oh, that is black, black as the pit of hell !

[WALLENSTEIN *betrays a sudden agitation.*

Thou canst not hear it named, and wilt thou do it ?
O turn back to thy duty. That thou canst,
I hold it certain. Send me to Vienna ;
I'll make thy peace for thee with the emperor.
He knows thee not. But I do know thee. He

Shall see thee, duke! with my unclouded eye,
And I bring back his confidence to thee.

WALLENSTEIN.

It is too late! Thou knowest not what has happened.

MAX.

Were it too late, and were things gone so far,
That a crime only could prevent thy fall,
Then — fall! fall honourably, even as thou stoodest.
Lose the command. Go from the stage of war!
Thou canst with splendour do it — do it too
With innocence. Thou hast lived much for others,
At length live thou for thy own self. I follow thee.
My destiny I never part from thine.

WALLENSTEIN.

It is too late! Even now, while thou art losing
Thy words, one after another, are the mile-stones
Left fast behind by my post couriers,
Who bear the order on to Prague and Eger.

[MAX. *stands as convulsed, with a gesture and
countenance expressing the most intense an-
guish.*]

Yield thyself to it. We act as we are forced.
I cannot give assent to my' own shame
And ruin. Thou — no — thou canst not forsake me!
So let us do, what must be done, with dignity,
With a firm step. What am I doing worse
Than did famed Cæsar at the Rubicon,
When he the legions led against his country,
The which his country had delivered to him?
Had he thrown down the sword, he had been lost.
As I were, if I but disarmed myself.

I trace out something in me of this spirit.
Give me his luck, that other thing I'll bear.

[MAX. *quits him abruptly.* WALLENSTEIN, *startled and overpowered, continues looking after him, and is still in this posture when TERZKY enters.*

SCENE III.

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY.

TERZKY.

Max. Piccolomini just left you?

WALLENSTEIN.

Where is Wrangel?

TERZKY.

He is already gone.

WALLENSTEIN.

In such a hurry?

TERZKY.

It is as if the earth had swallowed him.
He had scarce left thee, when I went to seek him.
I wished some words with him — but he was gone.
How, when, and where, could no one tell me. Nay,
I half believe it was the devil himself;
A human creature could not so at once
Have vanished.

ILLO (*enters*).

Is it true that thou wilt send
Octavio?

TERZKY.

How, Octavio! Whither send him?

WALLENSTEIN.

He goes to Frauenburg, and will lead hither
The Spanish and Italian regiments.

ILLO.

No!

Nay, heaven forbid!

WALLENSTEIN.

And why should heaven forbid?

ILLO.

Him! — that deceiver! Wouldst thou trust to him
The soldiery? Him wilt thou let slip from thee,
Now in the very instant that decides us —

TERZKY.

Thou wilt not do this! No! I pray thee, no!

WALLENSTEIN.

Ye are whimsical.

ILLO.

O but for this time, duke,
Yield to our warning! Let him not depart.

WALLENSTEIN.

And why should I not trust him only this time,
Who have always trusted him? What, then, has
happened
That I should lose my good opinion of him?

In complaisance to your whims, not my own,
I must, forsooth, give up a rooted judgment.
Think not I am a woman. Having trusted him
E'en till to-day, to-day too will I trust him.

TERZKY.

Must it be he — he only ? Send another.

WALLENSTEIN.

It must be he, whom I myself have chosen ;
He is well fitted for the business. Therefore
I gave it him.

ILLO.

Because he's an Italian —
Therefore is he well fitted for the business !

WALLENSTEIN.

I know you love them not, nor sire nor son,
Because that I esteem them, love them, visibly
Esteem them, love them more than you and others,
E'en as they merit. Therefore are they eye-blights,
Thorns in your footpath. But your jealousies,
In what affect they me or my concerns ?
Are they the worse to me because you hate them ?
Love or hate one another as you will,
I leave to each man his own moods and likings ;
Yet know the worth of each of you to me.

ILLO.

Von Questenberg, while he was here, was always
Lurking about with this Octavio.

WALLENSTEIN.

It happened with my knowledge and permission.

ILLO.

I know that secret messengers came to him
From Gallas —

WALLENSTEIN.

That's not true.

ILLO.

O thou art blind,
With thy deep-seeing eyes !

WALLENSTEIN.

Thou wilt not shake
My faith for me ; my faith, which founds itself
On the profoundest science. If 'tis false,
Then the whole science of the stars is false ;
For know, I have a pledge from Fate itself,
That he is the most faithful of my friends.

ILLO.

Hast thou a pledge that this pledge is not false ?

WALLENSTEIN.

There exist moments in the life of man,
When he is nearer the great Soul of the world
Than is man's custom, and possesses freely
The power of questioning his destiny :
And such a moment 'twas, when in the night
Before the action in the plains of Lützen,
Leaning against a tree, thoughts crowding thoughts,
I looked out far upon the ominous plain.
My whole life, past and future, in this moment
Before my mind's eye glided in procession,
And to the destiny of the next morning
The spirit, filled with anxious presentiment,
Did knit the most removed futurity.

Then said I also to myself, "So many
Dost thou command. They follow all thy stars,
And as on some great number set their all
Upon thy single head, and only man
The vessel of thy fortune. Yet a day
Will come, when destiny shall once more scatter
All these in many a several direction:
Few be they who will stand out faithful to thee."
I yearned to know which one was faithfulest
Of all, this camp included. Great destiny,
Give me a sign! And he shall be the man,
Who, on the approaching morning, comes the first
To meet me with a token of his love:
And thinking this, I fell into a slumber,
Then midmost in the battle was I led
In spirit. Great the pressure and the tumult!
Then was my horse killed under me: I sank;
And over me away, all unconcernedly,
Drove horse and rider — and thus trod to pieces
I lay, and panted like a dying man;
Then seized me suddenly a saviour arm;
It was Octavio's — I woke at once,
'Twas broad day, and Octavio stood before me.
"My brother," said he, "do not ride to-day
The dapple, as your wont; but mount the horse
Which I have chosen for thee. Do it, brother!
In love to me. A strong dream warned me
so."
It was the swiftness of this horse that snatched
me
From the hot pursuit of Bannier's dragoons.
My cousin rode the dapple on that day,
And never more saw I or horse or rider.

ILLO.

That was a chance.

WALLENSTEIN (*significantly*).

There's no such thing as chance,
And what to us seems merest accident
Springs from the deepest source of destiny.
In brief, 'tis signed and sealed that this Octavio
Is my good angel — and now no word more.
[*He is retiring.*]

TERZKY.

This is my comfort — Max. remains our hostage.

ILLO.

And he shall never stir from here alive.

WALLENSTEIN (*stops and turns himself around*).

Are ye not like the women, who for ever
Only recur to their first word, although
One had been talking reason by the hour!
Know, that the human being's thoughts and deeds
Are not like ocean billows, blindly moved.
The inner world, his microcosmus, is
The deep shaft, out of which they spring eternally.
They grow by certain laws, like the tree's fruit —
No juggling chance can metamorphose them.
Have I the human kernel first examined?
Then I know, too, the future will and action. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.

Chamber in the residence of PICCOLOMINI: OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI (attired for travelling), an ADJUTANT.

OCTAVIO.

Is the detachment here?

ADJUTANT.

It waits below.

OCTAVIO.

And are the soldiers trusty, adjutant?
Say, from what regiment hast thou chosen them?

ADJUTANT.

From Tiefenbach's.

OCTAVIO.

That regiment is loyal,
Keep them in silence in the inner court,
Unseen by all, and when the signal peals
Then close the doors, keep watch upon the house.
And all ye meet be instantly arrested. [*Exit ADJUTANT.*]
I hope indeed I shall not need their service,
So certain feel I of my well-laid plans;
But when an empire's safety is at stake
'Twere better too much caution than too little.

SCENE V.

*A chamber in PICCOLOMINI'S dwelling-house: OCTAVIO
PICCOLOMINI, ISOLANI, entering.*

ISOLANI.

Here am I — well! who comes yet of the others?

OCTAVIO (*with an air of mystery*).

But, first, a word with you, Count Isolani.

ISOLANI (*assuming the same air of mystery*).

Will it explode, ha? Is the duke about
To make the attempt? In me, friend, you may place
Full confidence — nay, put me to the proof.

OCTAVIO.

That may happen.

ISOLANI.

Noble brother, I am
Not one of those men who in words are valiant,
And when it comes to action skulk away.
The duke has acted toward me as a friend:
God knows it is so; and I owe him all;
He may rely on my fidelity.

OCTAVIO.

That will be seen hereafter.

ISOLANI.

Be on your guard,
All think not as I think; and there are many
Who still hold with the court — yes, and they say
That these stolen signatures bind them to nothing.

OCTAVIO.

Indeed! Pray name to me the chiefs that think so.

ISOLANI.

Plague upon them! all the Germans think so.
Esterhazy, Kaunitz, Deodati, too,
Insist upon obedience to the court.

OCTAVIO.

I am rejoiced to hear it.

ISOLANI.

You rejoice?

OCTAVIO.

That the emperor has yet such gallant servants,
And loving friends.

ISOLANI.

Nay, jeer not, I entreat you.
They are no such worthless fellows, I assure you.

OCTAVIO.

I am assured already. God forbid
That I should jest! In very serious earnest,
I am rejoiced to see an honest cause
So strong.

ISOLANI.

The devil! — what! — why, what means this?
Are you not, then — For what, then, am I here?

OCTAVIO.

That you may make full declaration, whether
You will be called the friend or enemy
Of the emperor.

ISOLANI (*with an air of defiance*).

That declaration, friend,
I'll make to him in whom a right is placed
To put that question to me.

OCTAVIO.

Whether, count,
That right is mine, this paper may instruct you.

ISOLANI (*stammering*).

Why, — why — what! this is the emperor's hand and
seal [Reads.
"Whereas the officers collectively
Throughout our army will obey the orders

Of the Lieutenant-General Piccolomini,
As from ourselves." — Hem! — Yes! so! — Yes! yes!
I — I give you joy, lieutenant-general!

OCTAVIO.

And you submit to the order?

ISOLANI.

I —

But you have taken me so by surprise —
Time for reflection one must have —

OCTAVIO.

Two minutes.

ISOLANI.

My God! but then the case is —

OCTAVIO.

Plain and simple.

You must declare you, whether you determine
To act a treason 'gainst your lord and sovereign,
Or whether you will serve him faithfully.

ISOLANI.

Treason! My God! But who talks then of treason?

OCTAVIO.

That is the case. The prince-duke is a traitor —
Means to lead over to the enemy
The emperor's army. Now, count! brief and full —
Say, will you break your oath to the emperor?
Sell yourself to the enemy? Say, will you?

ISOLANI.

What mean you? I — I break my oath, d'ye say
To his imperial majesty?
Did I say so! When, when have I said that?

OCTAVIO.

You have not said it yet — not yet. This instant
I wait to hear, count, whether you will say it.

ISOLANI.

Ay! that delights me now, that you yourself
Bear witness for me that I never said so.

OCTAVIO.

And you renounce the duke then?

ISOLANI.

If he's planning
Treason — why, treason breaks all bonds asunder.

OCTAVIO.

And are determined, too, to fight against him?

ISOLANI.

He has done me service — but if he's a villain,
Perdition seize him! All scores are rubbed off.

OCTAVIO.

I am rejoiced that you are so well disposed.
This night break off in the utmost secrecy
With all the light-armed troops — it must appear
As came the order from the duke himself.
At Frauenburg's the place of rendezvous;
There will Count Gallas give you further orders.

ISOLANI.

It shall be done. But you'll remember me
With the emperor — how well disposed you found me.

OCTAVIO.

I will not fail to mention it honourably.

[*Exit ISOLANI. A SERVANT enters.*

What, Colonel Butler! Show him up.

ISOLANI (*returning*).

Forgive me too my bearish ways, old father!

Lord God! how should I know, then, what a great Person I had before me.

OCTAVIO.

No excuses!

ISOLANI.

I am a merry lad, and if at time
A rash word might escape me 'gainst the court
Amidst my wine, — you know no harm was meant.

[*Exit.*

OCTAVIO.

You need not be uneasy on that score.
That has succeeded. Fortune favour us
With all the others only but as much.

SCENE VI.

OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI, BUTLER.

BUTLER.

At your command, lieutenant-general.

OCTAVIO.

Welcome, as honoured friend and visitor.

BUTLER.

You do me too much honour.

OCTAVIO (*after both have seated themselves*).

You have not
Returned the advances which I made you yesterday —
Misunderstood them as mere empty forms.
That wish proceeded from my heart — I was
In earnest with you — for 'tis now a time
In which the honest should unite most closely.

BUTLER.

'Tis only the like-minded can unite.

OCTAVIO.

True! and I name all honest men like-minded.
I never charge a man but with those acts
To which his character deliberately
Impels him; for alas! the violence
Of blind misunderstandings often thrusts
The very best of us from the right track.
You came through Frauenburg. Did the Count Gallas
Say nothing to you? Tell me. He's my friend.

BUTLER.

His words were lost on me.

OCTAVIO.

It grieves me sorely
To hear it: for his counsel was most wise.
I had myself the like to offer.

BUTLER.

Spare
Yourself the trouble — me the embarrassment
To have deserved so ill your good opinion.

OCTAVIO.

The time is precious — let us talk openly.
You know how matters stand here. Wallenstein
Meditates treason — I can tell you further,
He has committed treason; but few hours
Have passed since he a covenant concluded
With the enemy. The messengers are now
Full on their way to Egra and to Prague.
To-morrow he intends to lead us over
To the enemy. But he deceives himself;
For prudence wakes — the emperor has still
Many and faithful friends here, and they stand
In closest union, mighty though unseen.
This manifesto sentences the duke —
Recalls the obedience of the army from him,
And summons all the loyal, all the honest,
To join and recognise in me their leader.
Choose — will you share with us an honest cause?
Or with the evil share an evil lot?

BUTLER (*rises*).

His lot is mine.

OCTAVIO.

Is that your last resolve?

BUTLER.

It is.

OCTAVIO.

Nay, but bethink you, Colonel Butler.
As yet you have time. Within my faithful breast
That rashly uttered word remains interred.
Recall it, Butler! choose a better party;
You have not chosen the right one.

BUTLER (*going*).

Any other
Commands for me, lieutenant-general ?

OCTAVIO.

See your white hairs ; recall that word !

BUTLER.

Farewell !

OCTAVIO.

What ! Would you draw this good and gallant sword
In such a cause ? Into a curse would you
Transform the gratitude which you have earned
By forty years' fidelity from Austria ?

BUTLER (*laughing with bitterness*).

Gratitude from the House of Austria ! [*He is going.*]

OCTAVIO (*permits him to go as far as the door, then
calls after him*).

Butler !

BUTLER.

What wish you ?

OCTAVIO.

How was't with the count ?

BUTLER.

Count ? what ?

OCTAVIO (*coldly*).

The title that you wished, I mean.

BUTLER (*starts in sudden passion*).

Hell and damnation !

OCTAVIO (*coldly*).

You petitioned for it —
And your petition was repelled — was it so?

BUTLER.

Your insolent scoff shall not go by unpunished.
Draw!

OCTAVIO.

Nay! your sword to its sheath! and tell me calmly
How all that happened. I will not refuse you
Your satisfaction afterwards. Calmly, Butler!

BUTLER.

Be the whole world acquainted with the weakness
For which I never can forgive myself,
Lieutenant-general! Yes; I have ambition.
Ne'er was I able to endure contempt.
It stung me to the quick that birth and title
Should have more weight than merit has in the army.
I would fain not be meaner than my equal,
So in an evil hour I let myself
Be tempted to that measure. It was folly!
But yet so hard a penance it deserved not.
It might have been refused; but wherefore barb
And venom the refusal with contempt?
Why dash to earth and crush with heaviest scorn
The gray-haired man, the faithful veteran?
Why to the baseness of his parentage
Refer him with such cruel roughness, only
Because he had a weak hour and forgot himself?
But nature gives a sting e'en to the worm
Which wanton power treads on in sport and insult.

OCTAVIO.

You must have been calumniated. Guess you
The enemy who did you this ill service?

BUTLER.

Be't who it will — a most low-hearted scoundrel !
Some vile court-minion must it be, some Spaniard ;
Some young squire of some ancient family,
In whose light I may stand ; some envious knave,
Stung to his soul by my fair self-earned honours !

OCTAVIO.

But tell me, did the duke approve that measure ?

BUTLER.

Himself impelled me to it, used his interest
In my behalf with all the warmth of friendship.

OCTAVIO.

Ay ! are you sure of that ?

BUTLER.

I read the letter.

OCTAVIO.

And so did I — but the contents were different.

[BUTLER *is suddenly struck.*

By chance I'm in possession of that letter —

Can leave it to your own eyes to convince you.

[*He gives him the letter.*

BUTLER.

Ha ! what is this ?

OCTAVIO.

I fear me, Colonel Butler,
An infamous game have they been playing with you.
The duke, you say, impelled you to this measure ?
Now, in this letter, talks he in contempt

Concerning you ; counsels the minister
To give sound chastisement to your conceit,
For so he calls it.

[BUTLER reads through the letter ; his knees tremble,
he seizes a chair and sinks down in it.

You have no enemy, no persecutor ;
There's no one wishes ill to you. Ascribe
The insult you received to the duke only.
His aim is clear and palpable. He wished
To tear you from your emperor : he hoped
To gain from your revenge what he well knew
(What your long-tried fidelity convinced him)
He ne'er could dare expect from your calm reason.
A blind tool would he make you, in contempt
Use you, as means of most abandoned ends.
He has gained his point. Too well has he succeeded

In luring you away from that good path
On which you had been journeying forty years !

BUTLER (*his voice trembling*).

Can e'er the emperor's majesty forgive me ?

OCTAVIO.

More than forgive you. He would fain compensate
For that affront, and most unmerited grievance
Sustained by a deserving gallant veteran.
From his free impulse he confirms the present
Which the duke made you for a wicked purpose.
The regiment, which you now command, is yours.

[BUTLER attempts to rise, sinks down again. He
labours inwardly with violent emotions ; tries
to speak and cannot. At length he takes his
sword from the belt, and offers it to PICCO-
LOMINI.

OCTAVIO.

What wish you? Recollect yourself, friend.

BUTLER.

Take it.

OCTAVIO.

But to what purpose? Calm yourself.

BUTLER.

O take it!

I am no longer worthy of this sword.

OCTAVIO.

Receive it then anew, from my hands — and
Wear it with honour for the right cause ever.

BUTLER.

Perjure myself to such a gracious sovereign?

OCTAVIO.

You'll make amends. Quick! break off from the duke!

BUTLER.

Break off from him!

OCTAVIO.

What now? Bethink thyself.

BUTLER (*no longer governing his emotion*).

Only break off from him? He dies! he dies!

OCTAVIO.

Come after me to Frauenburg, where now
All who are loyal are assembling under

Counts Altringer and Gallas. Many others
I've brought to a remembrance of their duty :
This night be sure that you escape from Pilsen.

BUTLER (*strides up and down in excessive agitation,
then steps up to OCTAVIO with resolved countenance*).

Count Piccolomini ! dare that man speak
Of honour to you, who once broke his troth ?

OCTAVIO.

He who repents so deeply of it dares.

BUTLER.

Then leave me here upon my word of honour !

OCTAVIO.

What's your design ?

BUTLER.

Leave me and my regiment.

OCTAVIO.

I have full confidence in you. But tell me
What are you brooding ?

BUTLER.

That the deed will tell you.

Ask me no more at present. Trust to me.
Ye may trust safely. By the living God,
Ye give him over, not to his good angel !
Farewell. [*Exit* BUTLER.]

SERVANT (*enters with a billet*).

A stranger left it, and is gone.
The prince-duke's horses wait for you below.
[*Exit* SERVANT.]

OCTAVIO (*reads*).

"Be sure, make haste! Your faithful Isolani."
— O that I had but left this town behind me.
To split upon a rock so near the haven!
Away! This is no longer a safe place
For me! Where can my son be tarrying!

SCENE VII.

OCTAVIO and MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

MAX. *enters almost in a state of derangement, from extreme agitation; his eyes roll wildly, his walk is unsteady, and he appears not to observe his father, who stands at a distance, and gazes at him with a countenance expressive of compassion. He paces with long strides through the chamber, then stands still again, and at last throws himself into a chair, staring vacantly at the object directly before him.*

OCTAVIO (*advances to him*).

I am going off, my son.

[*Receiving no answer, he takes his hand.*

My son, farewell.

MAX.

Farewell.

OCTAVIO.

Thou wilt soon follow me?

MAX.

I follow thee?

Thy way is crooked — it is not my way.

[OCTAVIO *drops his hand and starts back.*

Oh, hadst thou been but simple and sincere,
Ne'er had it come to this — all had stood otherwise.
He had not done that foul and horrible deed,
The virtuous had retained their influence over him :
He had not fallen into the snares of villains.
Wherefore so like a thief and thief's accomplice
Didst creep behind him lurking for thy prey !
Oh, unblest falsehood ! Mother of all evil !
Thou misery-making demon, it is thou
That sinkest us in perdition. Simple truth,
Sustainer of the world, had saved us all !
Father, I will not, I cannot excuse thee !
Wallenstein has deceived me — oh, most foully !
But thou hast acted not much better.

OCTAVIO.

Son,

My son, ah ! I forgive thy agony !

MAX. (*rises and contemplates his father with looks
of suspicion*).

Was't possible ? hadst thou the heart, my father,
Hadst thou the heart to drive it to such lengths,
With cold premeditated purpose ? Thou —
Hadst thou the heart to wish to see him guilty
Rather than saved ? Thou risest by his fall.
Octavio, 'twill not please me.

OCTAVIO.

God in heaven !

MAX.

Oh, woe is me ! sure I have changed my nature.
How comes suspicion here — in the free soul ?
Hope, confidence, belief, are gone ; for all
Lied to me, all that I e'er loved or honoured.

No, no! not all! She — she yet lives for me,
And she is true, and open as the heavens!
Deceit is everywhere, hypocrisy,
Murder, and poisoning, treason, perjury:
The single holy spot is our love,
The only unprofaned in human nature.

OCTAVIO.

Max. — we will go together. 'Twill be better.

MAX.

What? ere I've taken a last parting leave,
The very last — no, never!

OCTAVIO.

Spare thyself
The pang of necessary separation.
Come with me! Come, my son!

[Attempts to take him with him.]

MAX.

No! as sure as God lives, no!

OCTAVIO (*more urgently*).

Come with me, I command thee! I, thy father.

MAX.

Command me what is human. I stay here.

OCTAVIO.

Max. ! in the emperor's name I bid thee come.

MAX.

No emperor has power to prescribe
Laws to the heart; and wouldst thou wish to rob me

Of the sole blessing which my fate has left me,
Her sympathy? Must then a cruel deed
Be done with cruelty? The unalterable
Shall I perform ignobly — steal away,
With stealthy coward flight forsake her? No!
She shall behold my suffering, my sore anguish,
Hear the complaints of the disparted soul,
And weep tears o'er me. Oh! the human race
Have steely souls — but she is as an angel.
From the black deadly madness of despair
Will she redeem my soul, and in soft words
Of comfort, plaining, loose this pang of death!

OCTAVIO.

Thou wilt not tear thyself away; thou canst not.
Oh, come, my son! I bid thee save thy virtue.

MAX.

Squander not thou thy words in vain.
The heart I follow, for I dare trust to it.

OCTAVIO (*trembling and losing all self-command*).

Max. ! Max. ! if that most damned thing could be,
If thou — my son — my own blood — (dare I think
it?)

Do sell thyself to him, the infamous,
Do stamp this brand upon our noble house,
Then shall the world behold the horrible deed,
And in unnatural combat shall the steel
Of the son trickle with the father's blood.

MAX.

Oh, hadst thou always better thought of men,
Thou hadst then acted better. Curst suspicion,
Unholy, miserable doubt! To him

Nothing on earth remains unwrenched and firm
Who has no faith.

OCTAVIO.

And if I trust thy heart,
Will it be always in thy power to follow it

MAX.

The heart's voice thou hast not o'erpowered — as little
Will Wallenstein be able to o'erpower it.

OCTAVIO.

O, Max. ! I see thee never more again !

MAX.

Unworthy of thee wilt thou never see me.

OCTAVIO.

I go to Frauenburg — the Pappenheimers
I leave thee here, the Lothrings too ; Tsokana
And Tiefenbach remain here to protect thee.
They love thee, and are faithful to their oath,
And will far rather fall in gallant contest
Than leave their rightful leader and their honour.

MAX.

Rely on this, I either leave my life
In the struggle, or conduct them out of Pilsen.

OCTAVIO.

Farewell, my son !

MAX.

Farewell !

OCTAVIO.

How ! not one look
Of filial love ? No grasp of the hand at parting ?

It is a bloody war to which we are going,
And the event uncertain and in darkness.
So used we not to part — it was not so!
Is it then true? I have a son no longer?

[MAX. *falls into his arms, they hold each other for
a long time in a speechless embrace, then go
away at different sides.*

(The curtain drops.)

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A chamber in the house of the Duchess of Friedland.

COUNTESS TERZKY, THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN (*the two
latter sit at the same table at work*).

COUNTESS (*watching them from the opposite side*).

So you have nothing to ask me — nothing?
I have been waiting for a word from you.
And could you then endure in all this time
Not once to speak his name?

[THEKLA *remaining silent the COUNTESS rises and
advances to her.*

Why, how comes this?

Perhaps I am already grown superfluous,
And other ways exist, besides through me?
Confess it to me, Thekla: have you seen him?

THEKLA.

To-day and yesterday I have not seen him.

COUNTESS.

And not heard from him, either? Come, be open.

THEKLA.

No syllable.

COUNTESS.

And still you are so calm?

THEKLA.

I am.

COUNTESS.

May it please you, leave us, Lady Neubrunn.

[*Exit* LADY NEUBRUNN.]

SCENE II.

The COUNTESS, THEKLA.

COUNTESS.

It does not please me, princess, that he holds
Himself so still, exactly at this time.

THEKLA.

Exactly at this time?

COUNTESS.

He now knows all.

'Twere now the moment to declare himself

THEKLA.

If I'm to understand you, speak less darkly.

COUNTESS.

'Twas for that purpose that I bade her leave us.
Thekla, you are no more a child. Your heart
Is no more in nonage: for you love,
And boldness dwells with love — that you have proved

Your nature moulds itself upon your father's
More than your mother's spirit. Therefore may you
Hear what were too much for her fortitude.

THEKLA.

Enough: no further preface, I entreat you.
At once, out with it! Be it what it may,
It is not possible that it should torture me
More than this introduction. What have you
To say to me? Tell me the whole, and briefly!

COUNTESS.

You'll not be frightened —

THEKLA.

Name it, I entreat you.

COUNTESS.

It lies within your power to do your father
A weighty service —

THEKLA.

Lies within my power.

COUNTESS.

Max. Piccolomini loves you. You can link him
Indissolubly to your father.

THEKLA.

I?

What need of me for that? And is he not
Already linked to him?

COUNTESS.

He was.

THEKLA.

And wherefore
Should he not be so now — not be so always?

COUNTESS.

He cleaves to the emperor too.

THEKLA.

Not more than duty
And honour may demand of him.

COUNTESS.

We ask
Proofs of his love, and not proofs of his honour.
Duty and honour!
Those are ambiguous words with many meanings.
You should interpret them for him: his love
Should be the sole definer of his honour.

THEKLA.

How?

COUNTESS.

The emperor or you must he renounce.

THEKLA.

He will accompany my father gladly
In his retirement. From himself you heard,
How much he wished to lay aside the sword.

COUNTESS.

He must not lay the sword aside, we mean;
He must unsheath it in your father's cause.

THEKLA.

He'll spend with gladness and alacrity
His life, his heart's blood in my father's cause,
If shame or injury be intended him.

COUNTESS.

You will not understand me. Well, hear then :—
Your father has fallen off from the emperor,
And is about to join the enemy
With the whole soldiery —

THEKLA.

Alas, my mother !

COUNTESS.

There needs a great example to draw on
The army after him. The Piccolomini
Possess the love and reverence of the troops ;
They govern all opinions, and wherever
They lead the way, none hesitate to follow.
The son secures the father to our interests —
You've much in your hands at this moment.

THEKLA.

Ah,

My, miserable mother ! what a death-stroke
Awaits thee ! No ! she never will survive it.

COUNTESS.

She will accommodate her soul to that
Which is and must be. I do know your mother !
The far-off future weighs upon her heart
With torture of anxiety ; but is it
Unalterably, actually present,
She soon resigns herself, and bears it calmly.

THEKLA.

O my foreboding bosom! Even now,
E'en now 'tis here, that icy hand of horror!
And my young hope lies shuddering in its grasp;
I knew it well — no sooner had I entered,
An heavy ominous presentiment
Revealed to me that spirits of death were hovering
Over my happy fortune. But why think I
First of myself? My mother! O my mother!

COUNTESS.

Calm yourself! Break not out in vain lamenting!
Preserve you for your father the firm friend,
And for yourself the lover, all will yet
Prove good and fortunate.

THEKLA.

Prove good! What good?
Must we not part; part ne'er to meet again?

COUNTESS.

He parts not from you! He cannot part from you.

THEKLA.

Alas, for his sore anguish! It will rend
His heart asunder.

COUNTESS.

If indeed he loves you,
His resolution will be speedily taken.

THEKLA.

His resolution will be speedily taken —
Oh, do not doubt of that! A resolution:
Does there remain one to be taken?

COUNTESS.

Hush!

Collect yourself! I hear your mother coming.

THEKLA.

How shall I bear to see her?

COUNTESS.

Collect yourself.

SCENE III.

To them enter the DUCHESS.

DUCHESS (*to the* COUNTESS).

Who was here, sister? I heard some one talking,
And passionately, too.

COUNTESS.

Nay, there was no one.

DUCHESS.

I am growing so timorous, every trifling noise
Scatters my spirits, and announces to me
The footstep of some messenger of evil.
And you can tell me, sister, what the event is?
Will he agree to do the emperor's pleasure,
And send the horse regiments to the cardinal?
Tell me, has he dismissed Von Questenberg
With a favourable answer?

COUNTESS.

No, he has not.

DUCHESS.

Alas! then all is lost! I see it coming,
The worst that can come! Yes, they will depose him,
The accursed business of the Regensburg diet
Will all be acted o'er again!

COUNTESS.

No! never!

Make your heart easy, sister, as to that.

[THEKLA, *in extreme agitation, throws herself upon
her mother, and enfolds her in her arms,
weeping.*

DUCHESS.

Yes, my poor child!

Thou too hast lost a most affectionate godmother
In the empress. Oh, that stern, unbending man!
In this unhappy marriage what have I
Not suffered, not endured? For even as if
I had been linked on to some wheel of fire
That restless, ceaseless, whirls impetuous onward,
I have passed a life of frights and horrors with him,
And ever to the brink of some abyss
With dizzy headlong violence he bears me.
Nay, do not weep, my child. Let not my sufferings
Presignify unhappiness to thee,
Nor blacken with their shade the fate that waits thee.
Their lives no second Friedland; thou, my child,
Hast not to fear thy mother's destiny.

THEKLA.

Oh, let us supplicate him, dearest mother!
Quick! quick! here's no abiding-place for us.
Here every coming hour broods into life
Some new affrightful monster.

DUCHESS.

Thou wilt share

An easier, calmer lot, my child ! We, too,
I and thy father, witnessed happy days.
Still think I with delight of those first years,
When he was making progress with glad effort,
When his ambition was a genial fire,
Not that consuming flame which now it is.
The emperor loved him, trusted him ; and all
He undertook could not but be successful.
But since that ill-starred day at Regensburg,
Which plunged him headlong from his dignity,
A gloomy, uncompanionable spirit,
Unsteady and suspicious, has possessed him.
His quiet mind forsook him, and no longer
Did he yield up himself in joy and faith
To his old luck and individual power ;
But thenceforth turned his heart and best affections
All to those cloudy sciences which never
Have yet made happy him who followed them.

COUNTESS.

You see it, sister ! as your eyes permit you,
But surely this is not the conversation
To pass the time in which we are waiting for him.
You know he will be soon here. Would you have him
Find her in this condition ?

DUCHESS.

Come, my child !

Come, wipe away thy tears, and show thy father
A cheerful countenance. See, the tie-knot here
Is off ; this hair must not hang so dishevelled.
Come, dearest ! dry thy tears up. They deform
Thy gentle eye. Well, now — what was I saying ?

Yes, in good truth, this Piccolomini
Is a most noble and deserving gentleman.

COUNTESS.

That is he, sister !

THEKLA (*to the COUNTESS, with marks of great oppression of spirits*).

Aunt, you will excuse me ? [*Is going.*]

COUNTESS.

But, whither ? See, your father comes

THEKLA.

I cannot see him now.

COUNTESS.

Nay, but bethink you.

THEKLA.

Believe me, I cannot sustain his presence.

COUNTESS.

But he will miss you, will ask after you.

DUCHESS.

What, now ? Why is she going ?

COUNTESS.

She's not well.

DUCHESS (*anxiously*).

What ails, then, my beloved child ?

[*Both follow the PRINCESS, and endeavour to detain her. During this WALLENSTEIN appears, engaged in conversation with ILLO.*]

SCENE IV.

WALLENSTEIN, ILLO, COUNTESS, DUCHESS, THEKLA.

WALLENSTEIN.

All quiet in the camp?

ILLO.

It is all quiet.

WALLENSTEIN.

In a few hours may couriers come from Prague
With tidings that this capital is ours.
Then we may drop the mask, and to the troops
Assembled in this town make known the measure
And its result together. In such cases
Example does the whole. Whoever is foremost
Still leads the herd. An imitative creature
Is man. The troops at Prague conceive no other,
Than that the Pilsen army has gone through
The forms of homage to us; and in Pilsen
They shall swear fealty to us, because
The example has been given them by Prague.
Butler, you tell me, has declared himself?

ILLO.

At his own bidding, unsolicited,
He came to offer you himself and regiment.

WALLENSTEIN.

I find we must not give implicit credence
To every warning voice that makes itself
Be listened to in the heart. To hold us back,
Oft does the lying spirit counterfeit
The voice of truth and inward revelation,

Scattering false oracles. And thus have I
To entreat forgiveness for that secretly.
I've wronged this honourable gallant man,
This Butler: for a feeling of the which
I am not master (fear I would not call it),
Creeps o'er me instantly, with sense of shuddering,
At his approach, and stops love's joyous motion.
And this same man, against whom I am warned,
This honest man is he who reaches to me
The first pledge of my fortune.

ILLO.

And doubt not
That his example will win over to you
The best men in the army.

WALLENSTEIN.

Go and send
Isolani hither. Send him immediately.
He is under recent obligations to me:
With him will I commence the trial. Go. [*Exit* ILLO.]

WALLENSTEIN (*turns himself around to the females*).

Lo, there's the mother with the darling daughter.
For once we'll have an interval of rest —
Come! my heart yearns to live a cloudless hour
In the beloved circle of my family.

COUNTESS.

'Tis long since we've been thus together, brother.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the COUNTESS, aside*).

Can she sustain the news? Is she prepared?

COUNTESS.

Not yet.

WALLENSTEIN.

Come here, my sweet girl ! Seat thee by me,
For there is a good spirit on thy lips.
Thy mother praised to me thy ready skill ;
She says a voice of melody dwells in thee,
Which doth enchant the soul. Now such a voice
Will drive away from me the evil demon
That beats his black wings close above my head.

DUCHESS.

Where is thy lute, my daughter ? Let thy father
Hear some small trial of thy skill.

THEKLA.

My mother

I —

DUCHESS.

Trembling ? Come, collect thyself. Go, cheer
Thy father.

THEKLA.

O my mother ! I — I cannot.

COUNTESS.

How, what is that, niece ?

THEKLA (*to the COUNTESS*).

O spare me — sing — now — in this sore anxiety
Of the overburdened soul — to sing to him
Who is thrusting, even now, my mother headlong
Into her grave.

DUCHESS.

How, Thekla ! Humoursome !
What ! shall thy father have expressed a wish
In vain ?

COUNTESS.

Here is the lute.

THEKLA.

My God! how can I—

[*The orchestra plays. During the ritornello THEKLA expresses in her gestures and countenance the struggle of her feelings; and at the moment that she should begin to sing contracts herself together, as one shuddering, throws the instrument down, and retires abruptly.*]

DUCHESS.

My child! Oh, is she ill—

WALLENSTEIN.

What ails the maiden?

Say, is she often so?

COUNTESS.

Since then herself

Has now betrayed it, I too must no long
Conceal it.

WALLENSTEIN.

What?

COUNTESS.

She loves him!

WALLENSTEIN.

Loves him? Whom?

COUNTESS.

Max. does she love! Max. Piccolomini!
Hast thou never noticed it? Nor yet my sister?

DUCHESS.

Was it this that lay so heavy on her heart?
God's blessing on thee, my sweet child! Thou needest
Never take shame upon thee for thy choice.

COUNTESS.

This journey, if 'twere not thy aim, ascribe it
To thine own self. Thou shouldst have chosen another
To have attended her.

WALLENSTEIN.

And does he know it?

COUNTESS.

Yes, and he hopes to win her!

WALLENSTEIN.

Hopes to win her!

Is the boy mad?

COUNTESS.

Well — hear it from themselves.

WALLENSTEIN.

He thinks to carry off Duke Friedland's daughter!
Ay? The thought pleases me.
The young man has no grovelling spirit.

COUNTESS.

Since

Such and such constant favour you have shown him —

WALLENSTEIN.

He chooses finally to be my heir.
And true it is, I love the youth; yea, honour him.

But must he therefore be my daughter's husband ?
Is it daughters only ? Is it only children
That we must show our favour by ?

DUCHESS.

His noble disposition and his manners —

WALLENSTEIN.

Win him my heart, but not my daughter.

DUCHESS.

His rank, his ancestors —

Then

WALLENSTEIN.

Ancestors ! What ?

He is a subject, and my son-in-law
I will seek out upon the thrones of Europe.

DUCHESS.

O dearest Albrecht ! Climb we not too high
Lest we should fall too low.

WALLENSTEIN.

What ! have I paid

A price so heavy to ascend this eminence,
And jut out high above the common herd,
Only to close the mighty part I play
In life's great drama with a common kinsman ?
Have I for this — [*Stops suddenly, repressing himself.*

She is the only thing
That will remain behind of me on earth ;
And I will see a crown around her head,
Or die in the attempt to place it there.
I hazard all — all ! and for this alone,

To lift her into greatness —

Yea, in this moment, in the which we are speaking —
[*He recollects himself.*]

And I must now, like a soft-hearted father,
Couple together in good peasant fashion
The pair that chance to suit each other's liking —
And I must do it now, even now, when I
Am stretching out the wreath that is to twine
My full accomplished work — no! she is the jewel,
Which I have treasured long, my last, my noblest,
And 'tis my purpose not to let her from me
For less than a king's sceptre.

DUCHESS.

O my husband!
You're ever building, building to the clouds,
Still building higher, and still higher building,
And ne'er reflect, that the poor narrow basis
Cannot sustain the giddy tottering column.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the COUNTESS*).

Have you announced the place of residence
Which I have destined for her?

COUNTESS.

No! not yet,
'Twere better you yourself disclosed it to her.

DUCHESS.

How? Do we not return to Carinthia then?

WALLENSTEIN.

No.

DUCHESS.

And to no other of your lands or seats?

WALLENSTEIN.

You would not be secure there.

DUCHESS.

Not secure
In the emperor's realms, beneath the emperor's
Protection?

WALLENSTEIN.

Friedland's wife may be permitted
No longer to hope that.

DUCHESS.

O God in heaven!
And have you brought it even to this!

WALLENSTEIN.

In Holland
You'll find protection.

DUCHESS.

In a Lutheran country?
What? And you send us into Lutheran countries?

WALLENSTEIN.

Duke Franz of Lauenburg conducts you thither.

DUCHESS.

Duke Franz of Lauenburg?
The ally of Sweden, the emperor's enemy?

WALLENSTEIN.

The emperor's enemies are mine no longer.

DUCHESS (*casting a look of terror on the DUKE and the COUNTESS*).

Is it then true? It is. You are degraded:
Deposed from the command? O God in heaven.

COUNTESS (*aside to the DUKE*).

Leave her in this belief. Thou seest she cannot
Support the real truth.

SCENE V.

To them enter COUNT TERZKY.

COUNTESS.

Terzky!

What ails him? What an image of affright!
He looks as he had seen a ghost.

TERZKY (*leading WALLENSTEIN aside*).

Is it thy command that all the Croats —

WALLENSTEIN.

Mine!

TERZKY.

We are betrayed.

WALLENSTEIN.

What?

TERZKY.

They are off! This night
The Jägers likewise — all the villages
In the whole round are empty.

WALLENSTEIN.

Isolani!

TERZKY.

Him thou hast sent away. Yes, surely.

WALLENSTEIN.

TERZKY.

No? Hast thou not sent him off? Nor Deodati?
They are vanished, both of them.

SCENE VI.

To them enter ILLO.

ILLO.

Has Terzky told thee?

TERZKY.

He knows all.

ILLO.

And likewise
That Esterhazy, Goetz, Maradas, Kaunitz,
Kolatto, Palfi, have forsaken thee.

TERZKY.

Damnation!

WALLENSTEIN (*winks at them*).

Hush!

COUNTESS (*who has been watching them anxiously from
the distance and now advances to them*).

Terzky! Heaven! What is it? What has happened?

WALLENSTEIN (*scarcely suppressing his emotions*).

Nothing! let us be gone!

TERZKY (*following him*).

Theresa, it is nothing.

COUNTESS (*holding him back*).

Nothing? Do I not see that all the life-blood
Has left your cheeks — look you not like a ghost?
That even my brother but affects a calmness?

PAGE (*enters*).

An aide-de-camp inquires for the Count Terzky.
[TERZKY follows the PAGE.]

WALLENSTEIN.

Go, hear his business. [To ILLO.
This could not have happened
So unsuspected without mutiny.
Who was on guard at the gates?

ILLO.

'Twas Tiefenbach.

WALLENSTEIN.

Let Tiefenbach leave guard without delay,
And Terzky's grenadiers relieve him. [ILLO is going.
Stop!
Hast thou heard aught of Butler?

ILLO.

Him I met:

He will be here himself immediately.

Butler remains unshaken.

[*ILLO exit.* WALLENSTEIN *is following him.*

COUNTESS.

Let him not leave thee, sister! go, detain him!

There's some misfortune.

DUCHESS (*clinging to him*).

Gracious Heaven! What is it?

WALLENSTEIN.

Be tranquil! leave me, sister! dearest wife!

We are in camp, and this is naught unusual;

Here storm and sunshine follow one another

With rapid interchanges. These fierce spirits

Champ the curb angrily, and never yet

Did quiet bless the temples of the leader;

If I am to stay, go you. The plaints of women

Ill suit the scene where men must act.

[*He is going: TERZKY returns.*

TERZKY.

Remain here. From this window must we see it.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the COUNTESS*).

Sister, retire!

COUNTESS.

No — never!

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis my will.

TERZKY (*leads the COUNTESS aside, and drawing her attention to the DUCHESS*).

Theresa !

DUCHESS.

Sister, come ! since he commands it.

SCENE VII.

WALLESTEIN, TERZKY.

WALLENSTEIN (*stepping to the window*).

What now, then ?

TERZKY.

There are strange movements among all the troops,
And no one knows the cause. Mysteriously,
With gloomy silentness, the several corps
Marshal themselves, each under its own banners ;
Tiefenbach's corps make threatening movements ; only
The Pappenheimers still remain aloof
In their own quarters and let no one enter.

WALLENSTEIN.

Does Piccolomini appear among them ?

TERZKY.

We are seeking him : he is nowhere to be met with.

WALLENSTEIN.

What did the aide-de-camp deliver to you ?

TERZKY.

My regiments had despatched him ; yet once more
They swear fidelity to thee, and wait
The shout for onset, all prepared, and eager.

WALLENSTEIN.

But whence arose this larum in the camp?
It should have been kept secret from the army
Till fortune had decided for us at Prague.

TERZKY.

Oh, that thou hadst believed me! Yester-evening
Did we conjure thee not to let that skulker,
That fox, Octavio, pass the gates of Pilsen.
Thou gavest him thy own horses to flee from thee.

WALLENSTEIN.

The old tune still! Now, once for all, no more
Of this suspicion — it is doting folly.

TERZKY.

Thou didst confide in Isolani too;
And lo! he was the first that did desert thee.

WALLENSTEIN.

It was but yesterday I rescued him
From abject wretchedness. Let that go by;
I never reckoned yet on gratitude.
And wherein doth he wrong in going from me?
He follows still the god whom all his life
He has worshipped at the gaming-table. With
My fortune and my seeming destiny
He made the bond and broke it, not with me.
I am but the ship in which his hopes were stowed
And with the which, well-pleased and confident,
He traversed the open sea; now he beholds it
In eminent jeopardy among the coast-rocks,
And hurries to preserve his wares. As light
As the free bird from the hospitable twig
Where it had nested he flies off from me:

No human tie is snapped betwixt us two.
Yea, he deserves to find himself deceived
Who seeks a heart in the unthinking man.
Like shadows on a stream, the forms of life
Impress their characters on the smooth forehead,
Naught sinks into the bosom's silent death:
Quick sensibility of pain and pleasure
Moves the light fluids lightly; but no soul
Warmeth the inner frame.

TERZKY.

Yet, would I rather
Trust the smooth brow than that deep furrowed one.

SCENE VIII.

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY, ILLO.

ILLO (*who enters agitated with rage*).

Treason and mutiny!

TERZKY.

And what further now?

ILLO.

Tiefenbach's soldiers, when I gave the orders
To go off guard — mutinous villains!

TERZKY.

Well!

WALLENSTEIN.

What followed?

ILLO.

They refused obedience to them.

TERZKY.

Fire on them instantly! Give out the order.

WALLENSTEIN.

Gently! what cause did they assign?

ILLO.

No other,
They said, had right to issue orders but
Lieutenant-General Piccolomini.

WALLENSTEIN (*in a convulsion of agony*).

What? How is that?

ILLO.

He takes that office on him by commission,
Under sign-manual from the emperor.

TERZKY.

From the emperor — hearest thou, duke?

ILLO.

At his incitement
The generals made that stealthy flight —

TERZKY.

Duke, hearest thou?

ILLO.

Caraffa too, and Montecuculi,
Are missing, with six other generals,
All whom he had induced to follow him.
This plot he has long had in writing by him
From the emperor; but 'twas finally concluded,

With all the detail of the operation,
Some days ago with the Envoy Questenberg.

[WALLENSTEIN *sinks down into a chair and covers his face.*

TERZKY.

Oh, hadst thou but believed me!

SCENE IX.

To them enter the COUNTESS.

COUNTESS.

This suspense,

This horrid fear — I can no longer bear it.
For heaven's sake tell me what has taken place?

ILLO.

The regiments are falling off from us.

TERZKY.

Octavio Piccolomini is a traitor.

COUNTESS.

O my foreboding! [*Rushes out of the room.*

TERZKY.

Hadst thou but believed me!
Now seest thou how the stars have lied to thee.

WALLENSTEIN.

The stars lie not; but we have here a work
Wrought counter to the stars and destiny.
The science is still honest: this false heart

Forces a lie on the truth-telling heaven.
 On a divine law divination rests;
 Where nature deviates from that law, and stumbles
 Out of her limits, there all science errs.
 True I did not suspect! Were it superstition
 Never by such suspicion to have affronted
 The human form, oh, may the time ne'er come
 In which I shame me of the infirmity.
 The wildest savage drinks not with the victim
 Into whose breast he means to plunge the sword.
 This, this, Octavio, was no hero's deed:
 'Twas not thy prudence that did conquer mine;
 A bad heart triumphed o'er an honest one.
 No shield received the assassin stroke; thou plungest
 Thy weapon on an unprotected breast —
 Against such weapons I am but a child.

SCENE X.

To these enter BUTLER.

TERZKY (*meeting him*).

Oh, look there, Butler! Here we've still a friend!

WALLENSTEIN (*meets him with outspread arms and embraces him with warmth*).

Come to my heart, old comrade! Not the sun
 Looks out upon us more revivingly,
 In the earliest month of spring,
 Than a friend's countenance in such an hour.

BUTLER.

My general; I come —

WALLENSTEIN (*leaning on BUTLER'S shoulder*).

Knowest thou already
That old man has betrayed me to the emperor.
What sayest thou? Thirty years have we together
Lived out, and held out, sharing joy and hardship.
We have slept in one camp-bed, drank from one glass,
One morsel shared! I leaned myself on him,
As now I lean me on thy faithful shoulder,
And now in the very moment when, all love,
All confidence, my bosom beat to his
He sees and takes the advantage, stabs the knife
Slowly into my heart.

[*He hides his face on BUTLER'S breast.*]

BUTLER.

Forget the false one.
What is your present purpose?

WALLENSTEIN.

Well remembered!
Courage, my soul! I am still rich in friends,
Still loved by destiny; for in the moment
That it unmask the plotting hypocrite
It sends and proves to me one faithful heart.
Of the hypocrite no more! Think not his loss
Was that which struck the pang: Oh, no! his treason
Is that which strikes the pang! No more of him!
Dear to my heart, and honoured were they both,
And the young man — yes — he did truly love me,
He — he — has not deceived me. But enough,
Enough of this — swift counsel now beseems us.
The courier, whom Count Kinsky sent from Prague,
I expect him every moment: and whatever
He may bring with him we must take good care
To keep it from the mutineers. Quick then!

Despatch some messenger you can rely on
To meet him, and conduct him to me.

[ILLO is going.

BUTLER (*detaining him*).

My general, whom expect you then ?

WALLENSTEIN.

The courier

Who brings me word of the event at Prague.

BUTLER (*hesitating*).

Hem !

WALLENSTEIN.

And what now ?

BUTLER.

You do not know it ?

WALLENSTEIN.

Well ?

BUTLER.

From what that larum in the camp arose ?

WALLENSTEIN.

From what ?

BUTLER.

That courier —

WALLENSTEIN (*with eager expectation*).

Well ?

BUTLER.

Is already here.

TERZKY and ILLO (*at the same time*).

Already here?

WALLENSTEIN.

My courier?

BUTLER.

For some hours.

WALLENSTEIN.

And I not know it?

BUTLER.

The sentinels detain him
In custody.

ILLO (*stamping with his foot*).

Damnation!

BUTLER.

And his letter
Was broken open, and is circulated
Through the whole camp.

WALLENSTEIN.

You know what it contains?

BUTLER.

Question me not!

TERZKY.

Illo! alas for us.

WALLENSTEIN.

Hide nothing from me — I can bear the worst.
Prague then is lost. It is. Confess it freely.

BUTLER.

Yes! Prague is lost. And all the several regiments
 At Budweiss, Tabor, Braunau, Königgratz,
 At Brunn, and Znaym, have forsaken you,
 And taken the oaths of fealty anew
 To the emperor. Yourself, with Kinsky, Terzky,
 And Illo have been sentenced.

[TERZKY and ILLO express alarm and fury. WAL-
 LENSTEIN remains firm and collected.]

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis decided!
 'Tis well! I have received a sudden cure
 From all the pangs of doubt: with steady stream
 Once more my life-blood flows! My soul's secure!
 In the night only Friedland stars can beam.
 Lingering irresolute, with fitful fears
 I drew the sword — 'twas with an inward strife,
 While yet the choice was mine. The murderous knife
 Is lifted for my heart! Doubt disappears!
 I fight now for my head and for my life.
 [Exit WALLENSTEIN; the others follow him.]

SCENE XI.

COUNTESS TERZKY (*enters from a side room*).

I can endure no longer. No! [Looks around her.
 Where are they!
 No one is here. They leave me all alone,
 Alone in this sore anguish of suspense.
 And I must wear the outward show of calmness
 Before my sister, and shut in within me
 The pangs and agonies of my crowded bosom.
 It is not to be borne. If all should fail;
 If — if he must go over to the Swedes,

An empty-handed fugitive, and not
As an ally, a covenanted equal,
A proud commander with his army following,
If we must wander on from land to land,
Like the Count Palatine, of fallen greatness
An ignominious monument. But no!
That day I will not see! And could himself
Endure to sink so low, I would not bear
To see him so low sunken.

SCENE XII.

COUNTESS, DUCHESS, THEKLA.

THEKLA (*endeavouring to hold back the DUCHESS*).

Dear mother, do stay here!

DUCHESS.

No! Here is yet
Some frightful mystery that is hidden from me.
Why does my sister shun me? Don't I see her
Full of suspense and anguish roam about
From room to room? Art thou not full of terror?
And what import these silent nods and gestures
Which stealthwise thou exchangest with her?

THEKLA.

Nothing:

Nothing, dear mother!

DUCHESS (*to the COUNTESS*).

Sister, I will know.

COUNTESS.

What boots it now to hide it from her? Sooner
Or later she must learn to hear and bear it.
'Tis not the time now to indulge infirmity;
Courage beseems us now, a heart collect,
And exercise and previous discipline
Of fortitude. One word, and over with it!
Sister, you are deluded. You believe
The duke has been deposed — the duke is not
Deposed — he is —

THEKLA (*going to the COUNTESS*).

What? do you wish to kill her?

COUNTESS.

The duke is —

THEKLA (*throwing her arms around her mother*).

Oh, stand firm! stand firm, my mother!

COUNTESS.

Revolted is the duke; he is preparing
To join the enemy; the army leave him,
And all has failed.

SCENE XIII.

A spacious room in the Duke of Friedland's Palace.

WALLENSTEIN (*in armour*).

Thou hast gained thy point, Octavio! Once more am I
Almost as friendless as at Regensburg.
There I had nothing left me but myself;

But what one man can do you have now experience.
The twigs have you hewed off, and here I stand
A leafless trunk. But in the sap within
Lives the creating power, and a new world
May sprout forth from it. Once already have I
Proved myself worth an army to you — I alone!
Before the Swedish strength your troops had melted;
Beside the Lech sank Tilly, your last hope;
Into Bavaria, like a winter torrent,
Did that Gustavus pour, and at Vienna
In his own palace did the emperor tremble.
Soldiers were scarce, for still the multitude
Follow the luck: all eyes were turned on me,
Their helper in distress; the emperor's pride
Bowed itself down before the man he had injured.
'Twas I must rise, and with creative word
Assemble forces in the desolate camps.
I did it. Like a god of war my name
Went through the world. The drum was beat; and,
lo!

The plough, the workshop is forsaken, all
Swarm to the old familiar long-loved banners;
And as the wood-choir rich in melody
Assemble quick around the bird of wonder,
When first his throat swells with his magic song,
So did the warlike youth of Germany
Crowd in around the image of my eagle.
I feel myself the being that I was.
It is the soul that builds itself a body,
And Friedland's camp will not remain unfilled.
Lead then your thousands out to meet me — true!
They are accustomed under me to conquer,
But not against me. If the head and limbs
Separate from each other, 'twill be soon
Made manifest in which the soul abode.

[ILLO and TERZKY enter.

Courage, friends! courage! we are still unvanquished;

I feel my footing firm ; five regiments, Terzky,
 Are still our own, and Butler's gallant troops ;
 And an host of sixteen thousand Swedes to-morrow.
 I was not stronger when, nine years ago,
 I marched forth, with glad heart and high of hope,
 To conquer Germany for the emperor.

SCENE XIV.

WALLENSTEIN, ILLO, TERZKY.

*(To them enter NEUMANN, who leads TERZKY aside, and
 talks with him.)*

TERZKY.

What do they want ?

WALLENSTEIN.

What now ?

TERZKY.

Ten cuirassiers

From Pappenheim request leave to address you
 In the name of the regiment.

WALLENSTEIN *(hastily to NEUMANN)*.

Let them enter.

[Exit NEUMANN.

This

May end in something. Mark you. They are still
 Doubtful, and may be won.

SCENE XV.

WALLENSTEIN, TERZKY, ILLO, *ten* CUIRASSIERS (*led by an ANSPESSADE,¹ march up and arrange themselves, after the word of command, in one front before the DUKE, and make their obeisance. He takes his hat off, and immediately covers himself again*).

ANSPESSADE.

Halt! Front! Present!

WALLENSTEIN (*after he has run through them with his eye, to the ANSPESSADE*).

I know thee well. Thou art out of Bruggen in Flanders:
Thy name is Mercy.

ANSPESSADE.

Henry Mercy.

WALLENSTEIN.

Thou wert cut off on the march, surrounded by the Hessians, and didst fight thy way with an hundred and eighty men through their thousand.

ANSPESSADE.

'Twas even so, general!

WALLENSTEIN.

What reward hadst thou for this gallant exploit?

¹ Anspessade, in German, Gefreiter, a soldier inferior to a corporal, but above the sentinels. The German name implies that he is exempt from mounting guard.

ANSPESSADE.

That which I asked for: the honour to serve in this corps.

WALLENSTEIN (*turning to a second*).

Thou wert among the volunteers that seized and made booty of the Swedish battery at Altenburg.

SECOND CUIRASSIER.

Yes, general

WALLENSTEIN.

I forget no one with whom I have exchanged words.
(*A pause.*) Who sends you?

ANSPESSADE.

Your noble regiment, the cuirassiers of Piccolomini.

WALLENSTEIN.

Why does not your colonel deliver in your request according to the custom of service?

ANSPESSADE.

Because we would first know whom we serve.

WALLENSTEIN.

Begin your address.

ANSPESSADE (*giving the word of command*).

Shoulder your arms!

WALLENSTEIN (*turning to a third*).

Thy name is Risbeck; Cologne is thy birthplace.

THIRD CUIRASSIER.

Risbeck of Cologne.

WALLENSTEIN.

It was thou that broughtest in the Swedish colonel Dubald, prisoner, in the camp at Nuremberg.

THIRD CUIRASSIER.

It was not I, general.

WALLENSTEIN.

Perfectly right! It was thy elder brother: thou hadst a younger brother, too: where did he stay?

THIRD CUIRASSIER.

He is stationed at Olmutz, with the imperial army.

WALLENSTEIN (*to the ANSPESSADE*).

Now then — begin.

ANSPESSADE.

There came to hand a letter from the emperor
Commanding us —

WALLENSTEIN (*interrupting him*).

Who chose you?

ANSPESSADE.

Every company
Drew its own man by lot.

WALLENSTEIN.

Now! to the business.

ANSPESSADE.

There came to hand a letter from the emperor
 Commanding us, collectively, from thee
 All duties of obedience to withdraw,
 Because thou wert an enemy and traitor.

WALLENSTEIN.

And what did you determine ?

ANSPESSADE.

All our comrades
 At Braunau, Budweiss, Prague, and Olmutz, have
 Obeyed already ; and the regiments here,
 Tiefenbach and Toscano, instantly
 Did follow their example. But — but we
 Do not believe that thou art an enemy
 And traitor to thy country, hold it merely
 For lie and trick, and a trumped-up Spanish story !

[*With warmth.*

Thyself shall tell us what thy purpose is,
 For we have found thee still sincere and true :
 No mouth shall interpose itself betwixt
 The gallant general and the gallant troops.

WALLENSTEIN.

Therein I recognise my Pappenheimers.

ANSPESSADE.

And this proposal makes thy regiment to thee :
 Is it thy purpose merely to preserve
 In thine own hands this military sceptre,
 Which so becomes thee, which the emperor
 Made over to thee by a covenant ?
 Is it thy purpose merely to remain
 Supreme commander of the Austrian armies ?

We will stand by thee, general! and guarantee
Thy honest rights against all opposition.
And should it chance that all the other regiments
Turn from thee, by ourselves we will stand forth
Thy faithful soldiers, and, as is our duty,
Far rather let ourselves be cut to pieces
Than suffer thee to fall. But if it be
As the emperor's letter says, if it be true,
That thou in traitorous wise wilt lead us over
To the enemy, which God in heaven forbid!
Then we too will forsake thee, and obey
That letter —

WALLENSTEIN.

Hear me, children!

ANSPESSADE.

Yes, or no.

There needs no other answer.

WALLENSTEIN.

Yield attention.

You're men of sense, examine for yourselves;
Ye think, and do not follow with the herd:
And therefore have I always shown you honour
Above all others, suffered you to reason;
Have treated you as free men, and my orders
Were but the echoes of your prior suffrage.

ANSPESSADE.

Most fair and noble has thy conduct been
To us, my general! With thy confidence
Thou hast honoured us, and shown us grace and favour
Beyond all other regiments; and thou seest
We follow not the common herd. We will
Stand by thee faithfully. Speak but one word —

Thy word shall satisfy us that it is not
 A treason which thou meditatest — that
 Thou meanest not to lead the army over
 To the enemy ; nor e'er betray thy country.

WALLENSTEIN.

Me, me are they betraying. The emperor
 Hath sacrificed me to my enemies,
 And I must fall, unless my gallant troops
 Will rescue me. See ! I confide in you.
 And be your hearts my stronghold ! At this breast
 The aim is taken, at this hoary head. -
 This is your Spanish gratitude, this is our
 Requital for that murderous fight at Lützen !
 For this we threw the naked breast against
 The halbert, made for this the frozen earth
 Our bed, and the hard stone our pillow ! never stream
 Too rapid for us, nor wood too impervious ;
 With cheerful spirit we pursued that Mansfeldt
 Through all the turns and windings of his flight :
 Yea, our whole life was but one restless march :
 And homeless, as the stirring wind, we travelled
 O'er the war-wasted earth. And now, even now,
 That we have well-nigh finished the hard toil,
 The unthankful, the curse-laden toil of weapons,
 With faithful indefatigable arm
 Have rolled the heavy war-load up the hill,
 Behold ! this boy of the emperor's bears away
 The honours of the peace, an easy prize !
 He'll weave, forsooth, into his flaxen locks
 The olive-branch, the hard-earned ornament
 Of this gray head, grown gray beneath the helmet.

ANSPESSADE.

That shall he not, while we can hinder it !
 No one, but thou, who hast conducted it

With fame, shall end this war, this frightful war.
 Thou ledest us out to the bloody field
 Of death; thou and no other shalt conduct us
 home,
 Rejoicing, to the lovely plains of peace —
 Shalt share with us the fruits of the long toil.

WALLENSTEIN.

What! Think you then at length in late old age
 To enjoy the fruits of toil? Believe it not.
 Never, no never, will you see the end
 Of the contest! you and me, and all of us,
 This war will swallow up! War, war, not peace,
 Is Austria's wish; and therefore, because I
 Endeavoured after peace, therefore I fall.
 For what cares Austria how long the war
 Wears out the armies and lays waste the world!
 She will but wax and grow amid the ruin
 And still win new domains.

[*The CUIRASSIERS express agitation by their gestures.*

Ye're moved — I see

A noble rage flash from your eyes, ye warriors!
 Oh, that my spirit might possess you now
 Daring as once it led you to the battle!
 Ye would stand by me with your veteran arms,
 Protect me in my rights; and this is noble!
 But think not that you can accomplish it.
 Your scanty number! to no purpose will you
 Have sacrificed you for your general. [*Confidentially.*
 No! let us tread securely, seek for friends;
 The Swedes have proffered us assistance, let us
 Wear for a while the appearance of good-will,
 And use them for your profit, till we both
 Carry the fate of Europe in our hands,
 And from our camp to the glad jubilant world
 Lead peace forth with the garland on her head!

ANSPESSADE.

"Tis then but mere appearances which thou
Dost put on with the Swede! Thou'lt not betray
The emperor? Wilt not turn us into Swedes?
This is the only thing which we desire
To learn from thee.

WALLENSTEIN.

What care I for the Swedes?
I hate them as I hate the pit of hell,
And under Providence I trust right soon
To chase them to their homes across their Baltic.
My cares are only for the whole: I have
A heart — it bleeds within me for the miseries
And piteous groanings of my fellow Germans.
Ye are but common men, but yet ye think
With minds not common; ye appear to me
Worthy before all others, that I whisper thee
A little word or two in confidence!
See now! already for full fifteen years,
The war-torch has continued burning, yet
No rest, no pause of conflict. Swede and German,
Papist and Lutheran! neither will give way
To the other; every hand's against the other.
Each one is party and no one a judge.
Where shall this end? Where's he that will unravel
This tangle, ever tangling more and more?
It must be cut asunder.
I feel that I am the man of destiny,
And trust, with your assistance, to accomplish it.

SCENE XVI.

To these enter BUTLER.

BUTLER (*passionately*).

General! this is not right!

WALLENSTEIN.

What is not right?

BUTLER.

It must needs injure us with all honest men.

WALLENSTEIN.

But what?

BUTLER.

It is an open proclamation
Of insurrection.

WALLENSTEIN.

Well, well — but what is it?

BUTLER.

Count Terzky's regiments tear the imperial eagle
From off his banners, and instead of it
Have reared aloft their arms.

ANSPESSADE (*abruptly to the CUIRASSIERS*).

Right about! March!

WALLENSTEIN.

Cursed be this counsel, and accursed who gave it!

[*To the CUIRASSIERS, who are retiring.*

Halt, children, halt! There's some mistake in this;

Hark! I will punish it severely. Stop!
 They do not hear. (*To ILLO.*) Go after them, assure
 them,
 And bring them back to me, cost what it may.

[*ILLO hurries out.*]

This hurls us headlong. Butler! Butler!
 You are my evil genius, wherefore must you
 Announce it in their presence? It was all
 In a fair way. They were half won! those madmen
 With their improvident over-readiness —
 A cruel game is Fortune playing with me.
 The zeal of friends it is that razes me,
 And not the hate of enemies.

SCENE XVII.

*To these enter the DUCHESS, who rushes into the chamber;
 THEKLA and the COUNTESS follow her.*

DUCHESS.

O Albrecht!

What hast thou done?

WALLENSTEIN.

And now comes this beside.

COUNTESS.

Forgive me, brother! It was not in my power —
 They know all.

DUCHESS.

What hast thou done?

COUNTESS (*to TERZKY*).

Is there no hope? Is all lost utterly?

TERZKY.

All lost. No hope. Prague in the emperor's hands,
The soldiery have taken their oaths anew.

COUNTESS.

That lurking hypocrite, Octavio!
Count Max. is off too.

TERZKY.

Where can he be? He's
Gone over to the emperor with his father.
[THEKLA *rushes out into the arms of her mother,*
hiding her face in her bosom.

DUCHESS (*enfolding her in her arms*).

Unhappy child! and more unhappy mother!

WALLENSTEIN (*aside to TERZKY*).

Quick! Let a carriage stand in readiness
In the court behind the palace. Scherfenberg,
Be their attendant; he is faithful to us.
To Egra he'll conduct them, and we follow.
[To ILLO, *who returns.*
Thou hast not brought them back?

ILLO.

Hear'st thou the uproar?
The whole corps of the Pappenheimers is
Drawn out: the younger Piccolomini,
Their colonel, they require: for they affirm,
That he is in the palace here, a prisoner;
And if thou dost not instantly deliver him,
They will find means to free him with the sword.
[*All stand amazed.*

TERZKY.

What shall we make of this?

WALLENSTEIN.

Said I not so?

O my prophetic heart! he is still here.

He has not betrayed me — he could not betray me.

I never doubted of it.

COUNTESS.

If he be

Still here, then all goes well; for I know what

[*Embracing* THEKLA.

Will keep him here for ever.

TERZKY.

It can't be.

His father has betrayed us, is gone over

To the emperor — the son could not have ventured

To stay behind.

THEKLA (*her eye fixed on the door*).

There he is!

SCENE XVIII.

To these enter MAX. PICCOLOMINI.

MAX.

Yes, here he is! I can endure no longer

To creep on tiptoe round this house, and lurk

In ambush for a favourable moment:

This loitering, this suspense exceeds my powers.

[*Advancing to* THEKLA, *who has thrown herself*
into her mother's arms.

Turn not thine eyes away. O look upon me!
 Confess it freely before all. Fear no one.
 Let who will hear that we both love each other.
 Wherefore continue to conceal it? Secrecy
 Is for the happy — misery, hopeless misery,
 Needeth no veil! Beneath a thousand suns
 It dares act openly.

[He observes the COUNTESS looking on THEKLA with expressions of triumph.]

No, lady! No!

Expect not, hope it not. I am not come
 To stay: to bid farewell, farewell for ever.
 For this I come! 'Tis over! I must leave thee!
 Thekla, I must — must leave thee! Yet thy hatred
 Let me not take with me. I pray thee, grant me
 One look of sympathy, only one look.
 Say that thou dost not hate me. Say it to me, Thekla!

[Grasps her hand.]

O God! I cannot leave this spot — I cannot!
 Cannot let go this hand. O, tell me, Thekla!
 That thou dost suffer with me, art convinced
 That I cannot act otherwise.

[THEKLA, avoiding his look, points with her hand to her father. MAX. turns around to the DUKE, whom he had not till then perceived.]

Thou here? It was not thou whom here I sought.
 I trusted never more to have beheld thee;
 My business is with her alone. Here will I
 Receive a full acquittal from this heart;
 For any other I am no more concerned.

WALLENSTEIN.

Think'st thou that, fool-like, I shall let thee go,
 And act the mock-magnanimous with thee?
 Thy father is become a villain to me;
 I hold thee for his son, and nothing more:
 Nor to no purpose shalt thou have been given

Into my power. Think not, that I will honour
That ancient love, which so remorselessly
He mangled. They are now passed by, those hours
Of friendship and forgiveness. Hate and vengeance
Succeed — 'tis now their turn — I too can throw
All feelings of the man aside — can prove
Myself as much a monster as thy father!

MAX (*calmly*).

Thou wilt proceed with me as thou hast power.
Thou knowest I neither brave nor fear thy rage.
What has detained me here, that too thou knowest.

[*Taking THEKLA by the hand.*]

See, duke! All — all would I have owed to thee,
Would have received from thy paternal hand
The lot of blessed spirits. This hast thou
Laid waste for ever — that concerns not thee.
Indifferent thou tramplest in the dust
Their happiness who most are thine. The God
Whom thou dost serve is no benignant deity.
Like as the blind, irreconcilable,
Fierce element, incapable of compact,
Thy heart's wild impulse only dost thou follow.¹

¹ I have here ventured to omit a considerable number of lines. I fear that I should not have done amiss had I taken this liberty more frequently. It is, however, incumbent on me to give the original, with a literal translation.

“ Weh denen, die auf Dich vertraun, an Dich
Die sichre Hütte ihres Glückes lehnem,
Gelockt von deiner geistlichen Gestalt.
Schnell unverhofft, bei nächtlich stiller Weile
Gälirts in dem tückschen Feuerschlunde, ladet
Sich aus mit tobender Gewalt, und weg
Treibt über alle Pflanzungen der Menschen
Der wilde Strom in grausender Zerstörung.

WALLENSTEIN.

“ Du schilderst deines Vaters Herz. Wie Du's
Beschreibst, so ist's in seinem Eingeweide,

WALLENSTEIN.

Thou art describing thy own father's heart.
 The adder! Oh, the charms of hell o'erpowered me!
 He dwelt within me, to my inmost soul
 Still to and fro he passed, suspected never.
 On the wide ocean, in the starry heaven
 Did mine eyes seek the enemy, whom I
 In my heart's heart had folded! Had I been
 To Ferdinand what Octavio was to me,
 War had I ne'er denounced against him. No,
 I never could have done it. The emperor was
 My austere master only, not my friend.

In dieser schwarzen Heuchlers Brust gestaltet.
 Oh, mich hat Höllenkunst getäuscht! Mir sandte
 Der Abgrund den verflecktesten der Geister,
 Den Lügenkundigsten herauf, und stellt' ihn
 Als Freund an meiner Seite. Wer vermag
 Der Hölle Macht zu widerstehn! Ich zog
 Den Basilisken auf an meinem Busen,
 Mit meinem Herzblut nährt ich ihn, er sog
 Sich schwelgend voll an meiner Liebe Brüsten,
 Ich hatte nimmer Ares gegen ihn,
 Weit offen liess ich des Gedankens Thore,
 Und warf die Schlüssel weiser Vorsicht weg,
 Am Sternenhimmel," etc.

LITERAL TRANSLATION.

"Alas! for those who place their confidence on thee, against thee lean the secure hut of their fortune, allured by thy hospitable form. Suddenly, unexpectedly, in a moment still as night, there is a fermentation in the treacherous gulf of fire; it discharges itself with raging force, and away over all the plantations of men drives the wild stream in frightful devastation. WALLENSTEIN. Thou art portraying thy father's heart; as thou describest, even so is it shaped in his entrails, in this black hypocrite's breast. Oh, the art of hell has deceived me! The abyss sent up to me the most spotted of the spirits, the most skillful in lies, and placed him as a friend by my side. Who may withstand the power of hell? I took the basilisk to my bosom, with my heart's blood I nourished him; he sucked himself glutfull at the breasts of my love. I never harboured evil toward him; wide open did I leave the door of my thoughts; I threw away the key of wise foresight. In the starry heaven," etc. We find a difficulty in believing this to have been written by Schiller.

There was already war 'twixt him and me
 When he delivered the commander's staff
 Into my hands; for there's a natural
 Unceasing war 'twixt cunning and suspicion;
 Peace exists only betwixt confidence
 And faith. Who poisons confidence, he murders
 The future generations.

MAX.

I will not
 Defend my father. Woe is me, I cannot!
 Hard deeds and luckless have taken place; one crime
 Drags after it the other in close link.
 But we are innocent: how have we fallen
 Into this circle of mishap and guilt?
 To whom have we been faithless? Wherefore must
 The evil deeds and guilt reciprocal
 Of our two fathers twine like serpents round us?
 Why must our fathers'
 Unconquerable hate rend us asunder,
 Who love each other?

WALLENSTEIN.

Max., remain with me.
 Go you not from me, Max.! Hark! I will tell thee —
 How when at Prague, our winter quarters, thou
 Wert brought into my tent a tender boy,
 Not yet accustomed to the German winters;
 Thy hand was frozen to the heavy colours;
 Thou wouldst not let them go.
 At that time did I take thee in my arms,
 And with my mantle did I cover thee;
 I was thy nurse, no woman could have been
 A kinder to thee; I was not ashamed
 To do for thee all little offices,
 However strange to me; I tended thee

Till life returned ; and when thine eyes first opened,
 I had thee in my arms. Since then, when have
 Altered my feelings toward thee? Many thousands
 Have I made rich, presented them with lands ;
 Rewarded them with dignities and honours ;
 Thee have I loved : my heart, my self, I gave
 To thee ; they all were aliens : thou wert
 Our child and inmate.¹ Max. ! Thou canst not leave
 me ;
 It cannot be ; I may not, will not think
 That Max. can leave me.

MAX.

Oh, my God !

WALLENSTEIN.

I have
 Held and sustained thee from thy tottering childhood.
 What holy bond is there of natural love,
 What human tie that does not knit thee to me ?
 I love thee, Max. ! What did thy father for thee,
 Which I too have not done, to the height of duty ?
 Go hence, forsake me, serve thy emperor ;
 He will reward thee with a pretty chain
 Of gold ; with his ram's fleece will he reward thee ;
 For that the friend, the father of thy youth,
 For that the holiest feeling of humanity,
 Was nothing worth to thee.

¹This a poor and inadequate translation of the affectionate simplicity of the original, —

“Sie alle waren Fremdlinge, Du warst
 Das Kind des Hauses.”

Indeed the whole speech is in the best style of Massinger. *O
 si sic omnia !*

MAX.

O God! how can I
Do otherwise. Am I not forced to do it,
My oath — my duty — my honour —

WALLENSTEIN.

How? Thy duty?
Duty to whom? Who art thou? Max! bethink thee
What duties may'st thou have? If I am acting
A criminal part toward the emperor,
It is my crime, not thine. Dost thou belong
To thine own self? Art thou thine own commander?
Stand'st thou, like me, a freeman in the world,
That in thy actions thou shouldst plead free agency?
On me thou art planted, I am thy emperor;
To obey me, to belong to me, this is
Thy honour, this a law of nature to thee!
And if the planet on the which thou livest
And hast thy dwelling, from its orbit starts,
It is not in thy choice, whether or no
Thou'lt follow it. Unfelt it whirls thee onward
Together with his ring, and all his moons.
With little guilt steppest thou into this contest;
Thee will the world not censure, it will praise thee,
For that thou held'st thy friend more worth to thee
Than names and influences more removed;
For justice is the virtue of the ruler,
Affection and fidelity the subject's.
Not every one doth it beseem to question
The far-off high Arcturus. Most securely
Wilt thou pursue the nearest duty: let
The pilot fix his eye upon the pole-star.

SCENE XIX.

To these enter NEUMANN.

WALLENSTEIN.

What now?

NEUMANN.

The Pappenheimers are dismounted,
And are advancing now on foot, determined
With sword in hand to storm the house, and free
The count, their colonel.

WALLENSTEIN (*to TERZKY*).

Have the cannon planted.

I will receive them with chain-shot. [*Exit TERZKY.*

Prescribe to me with sword in hand! Go, Neumann!

'Tis my command that they retreat this moment,

And in their ranks in silence wait my pleasure.

[NEUMANN *exit*. ILLO *steps to the window*.

COUNTESS.

Let him go, I entreat thee, let him go.

ILLO (*at the window*).

Hell and perdition!

WALLENSTEIN.

What is it?

ILLO.

They scale the council-house, the roof's uncovered,
They level at this house the cannon —

MAX.

Madmen.

ILLO.

They are making preparations now to fire on us.

DUCHESS *and* COUNTESS.

Merciful heaven !

MAX. (*to* WALLENSTEIN).

Let me go to them !

WALLENSTEIN.

Not a step !

MAX. (*pointing to* THEKLA *and the* DUCHESS).

But their life ! Thine !

WALLENSTEIN.

What tidings bringest thou, Terzky ?

SCENE XX.

To these TERZKY *returning.*

TERZKY.

Message and greeting from our faithful regiments.
 Their ardour may no longer be curbed in.
 They entreat permission to commence the attack ;
 And if thou wouldst but give the word of onset
 They could now charge the enemy in rear,
 Into the city wedge them, and with ease
 O'erpower them in the narrow streets.

ILLO.

Oh, come,

Let not their ardour cool. The soldiery
Of Butler's corps stand by us faithfully;
We are the greater number. Let us charge them
And finish here in Pilsen the revolt.

WALLENSTEIN.

What? shall this town become a field of slaughter,
And brother-killing discord, fire-eyed,
Be let loose through its streets to roam and rage?
Shall the decision be delivered over
To deaf remorseless rage, that hears no leader?
Here is not room for battle, only for butchery.
Well, let it be! I have long thought of it,
So let it burst then! *[Turns to MAX.]*

Well, how is it with thee?

Wilt thou attempt a heat with me? Away!
Thou art free to go. Oppose thyself to me,
Front against front, and lead them to the battle;
Thou'rt skilled in war, thou hast learned somewhat
under me,

I need not be ashamed of my opponent,
And never hadst thou fairer opportunity
To pay me for thy schooling.

COUNTESS.

Is it then,

Can it have come to this? What! Cousin, cousin!
Have you the heart?

MAX.

The regiments that are trusted to my care
I have pledged my troth to bring away from Pilsen
True to the emperor; and this promise will I
Make good, or perish. More than this no duty
Requires of me. I will not fight against thee,

Unless compelled ; for though an enemy,
Thy head is holy to me still.

[*Two reports of cannon. ILLO and TERZKY hurry to the window.*]

WALLENSTEIN.

What's that ?

TERZKY.

He falls.

WALLENSTEIN.

Falls ! Who ?

ILLO.

Tiefenbach's corps

Discharged the ordnance.

WALLENSTEIN.

Upon whom ?

ILLO.

On Neumann,

Your messenger.

WALLENSTEIN (*starting up*).

Ha ! Death and hell ! I will —

TERZKY.

Expose thyself to their blind frenzy ?

DUCHESS and COUNTESS.

No !

For God's sake, no !

ILLO.

Not yet, my general !

Oh, hold him ! hold him !

WALLENSTEIN.

Leave me —

MAX.

Do it not ;

Not yet ! This rash and bloody deed has thrown them
Into a frenzy-fit — allow them time —

WALLENSTEIN.

Away ! too long already have I loitered.
They are emboldened to these outrages,
Beholding not my face. They shall behold
My countenance, shall hear my voice —
Are they not my troops ? Am I not their general,
And their long-feared commander ! Let me see,
Whether indeed they do no longer know
That countenance which was their sun in battle !
From the balcony (mark !) I show myself
To these rebellious forces, and at once
Revolt is mounded, and the high-swollen current
Shrinks back into the old bed of obedience.

[*Exit* WALLENSTEIN ; ILLO, TERZKY, and BUTLER
follow.]

SCENE XXI.

COUNTESS, DUCHESS, MAX, and THEKLA.

COUNTESS (*to the* DUCHESS).

Let them but see him — there is hope still, sister.

DUCHESS.

Hope ! I have none !

MAX. (*who during the last scene has been standing at a distance, in a visible struggle of feelings, advances*).

This can I not endure.
With most determined soul did I come hither;
My purposed action seemed unblamable
To my own conscience — and I must stand here.
Like one abhorred, a hard, inhuman being:
Yea, loaded with the curse of all I love!
Must see all whom I love in this sore anguish,
Whom I with one word can make happy — O!
My heart revolts within me, and two voices.
Make themselves audible within my bosom.
My soul's benighted; I no longer can
Distinguish the right track. Oh, well and truly
Didst thou say, father, I relied too much
On my own heart. My mind moves to and fro —
I know not what to do.

COUNTESS.

What! you know not?
Does not your own heart tell you? Oh! then I
Will tell it you. Your father is a traitor,
A frightful traitor to us — he has plotted
Against our general's life, has plunged us all
In misery — and you're his son! 'Tis yours
To make the amends. Make you the son's fidelity
Outweigh the father's treason; that the name
Of Piccolomini be not a proverb
Of infamy, a common form of cursing
To the posterity of Wallenstein.

MAX.

Where is that voice of truth which I dare follow!
It speaks no longer in my heart. We all
But utter what our passionate wishes dictate:
Oh, that an angel would descend from heaven,

And scoop for me the right, the uncorrupted,
With a pure hand from the pure Fount of light.

[*His eyes glance on THEKLA.*

What other angel seek I? To this heart,
To this unerring heart, will I submit it;
Will ask thy love, which has the power to bless
The happy man alone, averted ever
From the disquieted and guilty — canst thou
Still love me, if I stay? Say that thou canst,
And I am the duke's —

COUNTESS.

Think, niece —

MAX.

Think nothing, Thekla!

Speak what thou feelest.

COUNTESS.

Think upon your father.

MAX.

I did not question thee, as Friedland's daughter.
Thee, the beloved and the unerring God
Within thy heart, I question. What's at stake?
Not whether diadem of royalty
Be to be won or not — that mightest thou think on.
Thy friend, and his soul's quiet are at stake:
The fortune of a thousand gallant men,
Who will all follow me; shall I forswear
My oath and duty to the emperor?
Say, shall I send into Octavio's camp
The parricidal ball? For when the ball
Has left its cannon, and is on its flight,
It is no longer a dead instrument!
It lives, a spirit passes into it;

The avenging furies seize possession of it,
And with sure malice guide it the worst way.

THEKLA.

Oh! Max. —

MAX. (*interrupting her*).

Nay, not precipitately either, Thekla.

I understand thee. To thy noble heart
The hardest duty might appear the highest.
The human, not the great part, would I act.
Even from my childhood to this present hour,
Think what the duke has done for me, how loved me,
And think, too, how my father has repaid him.
Oh, likewise the free lovely impulses
Of hospitality, the pious friend's
Faithful attachment, these, too, are a holy
Religion to the heart; and heavily
The shudderings of nature do avenge
Themselves on the barbarian that insults them.
Lay all upon the balance, all — then speak,
And let thy heart decide it.

THEKLA.

Oh, thy own
Hath long ago decided. Follow thou
Thy heart's first feeling —

COUNTESS.

Oh! ill-fated woman!

THEKLA.

Is it possible, that that can be the right,
The which thy tender heart did not at first
Detect and seize with instant impulse? Go,
Fulfil thy duty! I should ever love thee.

Whate'er thou hast chosen, thou wouldst still have acted
Nobly and worthy of thee — but repentance
Shall ne'er disturb thy soul's fair peace.

MAX.

Then I

Must leave thee, must part from thee!

THEKLA.

Being faithful

To thine own self, thou art faithful, too, to me :

If our fates part, our hearts remain united.

A bloody hatred will divide for ever

The houses Piccolomini and Friedland ;

But we belong not to our houses. Go!

Quick! quick! and separate thy righteous cause

From our unholy and unblessed one!

The curse of heaven lies upon our head :

'Tis dedicate to ruin. Even me

My father's guilt drags with it to perdition.

Mourn not for me :

My destiny will quickly be decided.

[MAX. clasps her in his arms in extreme emotion.

There is heard from behind the scene a loud,

wild, long-continued cry, Vivat Ferdinandus!

accompanied by warlike instruments. MAX.

and THEKLA remain without motion in each other's embraces.

SCENE XXII.

To the above enter TERZKY.

COUNTESS (meeting him).

What meant that cry? What was it?

TERZKY.

All is lost!

COUNTESS.

What! they regarded not his countenance?

TERZKY.

'Twas all in vain.

DUCHESS.

They shouted *Vivat*!

TERZKY.

To the emperor.

COUNTESS.

The traitors!

TERZKY.

Nay! he was not permitted
Even to address them. Soon as he began,
With deafening noise of warlike instruments
They drowned his words. But here he comes.

SCENE XXIII.

To these enter WALLENSTEIN, accompanied by ILLO and BUTLER.

WALLENSTEIN (*as he enters*).

Terzky!

TERZKY.

My general!

WALLENSTEIN.

Let our regiments hold themselves
In readiness to march; for we shall leave
Pilsen ere evening.

[*Exit TERZKY.*

Butler!

BUTLER.

Yes, my general.

WALLENSTEIN.

The Governor of Egra is your friend
And countryman. Write him instantly
By a post courier. He must be advised
That we are with him early on the morrow.
You follow us yourself, your regiment with you.

BUTLER.

It shall be done, my general!

WALLENSTEIN (*steps between MAX. and THEKLA, who have remained during this time in each other's arms*).

Part!

MAX.

O God!

[CUIRASSIERS enter with drawn swords, and assemble in the background. At the same time there are heard from below some spirited passages out of the Pappenheim March, which seem to address MAX.]

WALLENSTEIN (*to the CUIRASSIERS*).

Here he is, he is at liberty: I keep him
No longer.

[*He turns away, and stands so that MAX. cannot pass by him nor approach the PRINCESS.*]

MAX.

Thou know'st that I have not yet learnt to live
Without thee! I go forth into a desert,
Leaving my all behind me. Oh, do not turn

Thine eyes away from me! Oh, once more show me
Thy ever dear and honoured countenance.

[MAX. *attempts to take his hand, but is repelled:*
he turns to the COUNTESS.

Is there no eye that has a look of pity for me?

[*The COUNTESS turns away from him; he turns*
to the DUCHESS.

My mother!

DUCHESS.

Go where duty calls you. Haply
The time may come when you may prove to us
A true friend, a good angel at the throne
Of the emperor.

MAX.

You give me hope; you would not
Suffer me wholly to despair. No! no!
Mine is a certain misery. Thanks to heaven!
That offers me a means of ending it.

[*The military music begins again. The stage fills*
more and more with armed men. MAX. sees

BUTLER, and addresses him.

And you here, Colonel Butler — and will you
Not follow me? Well, then, remain more faithful
To your new lord than you have proved yourself
To the emperor. Come, Butler! promise me.
Give me your hand upon it, that you'll be
The guardian of his life, its shield, its watchman.
He is attainted, and his princely head
Fair booty for each slave that trades in murder.
Now he doth need the faithful eye of friendship,
And those whom here I see —

[*Casting suspicious looks on ILLO and BUTLER.*

ILLO.

Go — seek for traitors
In Gallas', in your father's quarters. Here



Is only one. Away! away! and free us
From his detested sight! Away!

[MAX. attempts once more to approach THEKLA.

WALLENSTEIN prevents him. MAX. stands irresolute, and in apparent anguish. In the meantime the stage fills more and more; and the horns sound from below louder and louder, and each time after a shorter interval.

MAX.

Blow, blow! Oh, were it but the Swedish trumpets,
And all the naked swords, which I see here,
Were plunged into my breast! What purpose you?
You come to tear me from this place! Beware,
Ye drive me not to desperation. Do it not!
Ye may repent it!

[The stage is entirely filled with armed men.

Yet more! weight upon weight to drag me down.
Think what ye're doing. It is not well done
To choose a man despairing for your leader;
You tear me from my happiness. Well, then,
I dedicate your souls to vengeance. Mark!
For your own ruin you have chosen me:
Who goes with me must be prepared to perish.

[He turns to the background; there ensues a sudden and violent movement among the CUIRASSIERS; they surround him, and carry him off in wild tumult. WALLENSTEIN remains immovable. THEKLA sinks into her mother's arms. The curtain falls. The music becomes loud and overpowering, and passes into a complete war-march — the orchestra joins it — and continues during the interval between the third and fourth acts.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

The BURGOMASTER'S house at Egra.

BUTLER (*just arrived*).

Here then he is by his destiny conducted.
Here, Friedland! and no further! From Bohemia
Thy meteor rose, traversed the sky awhile,
And here upon the borders of Bohemia
Must sink.

Thou hast forsworn the ancient colours,
Blind man! yet trustest to thy ancient fortunes.
Profaner of the altar and the hearth,
Against thy emperor and fellow citizens
Thou meanest to wage the war. Friedland, beware —
The evil spirit of revenge impels thee —
Beware thou, that revenge destroy thee not!

SCENE II.

BUTLER *and* GORDON.

GORDON.

Is it you?

How my heart sinks! The duke a fugitive traitor!
His princely head attainted! Oh, my God!
Tell me, general, I implore thee, tell me
In full, of all these sad events at Pilsen.

BUTLER.

You have received the letter which I sent you
By a post-courier?

GORDON.

Yes: and in obedience to it
Opened the stronghold to him without scruple,
For an imperial letter orders me
To follow your commands implicitly.
But yet forgive me! when even now I saw
The duke himself, my scruples recommenced.
For truly, not like an attainted man,
Into this town did Friedland make his entrance;
His wonted majesty beamed from his brow,
And calm, as in the days when all was right,
Did he receive from me the accounts of office.
'Tis said, that fallen pride learns condescension.
But sparing and with dignity the duke
Weighed every syllable of approbation,
As masters praise a servant who has done
His duty and no more.

BUTLER.

'Tis all precisely

As I related in my letter. Friedland
Has sold the army to the enemy,
And pledged himself to give up Prague and Egra.
On this report the regiments all forsook him,
The five excepted that belong to Terzky,
And which have followed him, as thou hast seen.
The sentence of attainder is passed on him,
And every loyal subject is required
To give him in to justice, dead or living.

GORDON.

A traitor to the emperor. Such a noble!
Of such high talents! What is human greatness?
I often said, this can't end happily.
His might, his greatness, and this obscure power
Are but a covered pitfall. The human being

May not be trusted to self-government.
The clear and written law, the deep-trod footmarks
Of ancient custom, are all necessary
To keep him in the road of faith and duty.
The authority intrusted to this man
Was unexampled and unnatural,
It placed him on a level with his emperor,
Till the proud soul unlearned submission. Woe is me!
I mourn for him! for where he fell, I deem
Might none stand firm. Alas! dear general,
We in our lucky mediocrity
Have ne'er experienced, cannot calculate,
What dangerous wishes such a height may breed
In the heart of such a man.

BUTLER.

Spare your laments
Till he need sympathy; for at this present
He is still mighty, and still formidable.
The Swedes advance to Egra by forced marches,
And quickly will the junction be accomplished.
This must not be! The duke must never leave
This stronghold on free footing; for I have
Pledged life and honour here to hold him prisoner,
And your assistance 'tis on which I calculate.

GORDON.

O that I had not lived to see this day!
From his hand I received this dignity,
He did himself intrust this stronghold to me,
Which I am now required to make his dungeon.
We subalterns have no will of our own:
The free, the mighty man alone may listen
To the fair impulse of his human nature.
Ah! we are but the poor tools of the law,
Obedience the sole virtue we dare aim at!

BUTLER.

Nay! let it not afflict you, that your power
Is circumscribed. Much liberty, much error!
The narrow path of duty is securest.

GORDON.

And all then have deserted him, you say?
He has built up the luck of many thousands,
For kingly was his spirit: his full hand
Was ever open! Many a one from dust
[*With a sly glance on* BUTLER
Hath he selected, from the very dust
Hath raised him into dignity and honour.
And yet no friend, not one friend hath he purchased,
Whose heart beats true to him in the evil hour.

BUTLER.

Here's one, I see.

GORDON.

I have enjoyed from him
No grace or favour. I could almost doubt,
If ever in his greatness he once thought on
An old friend of his youth. For still my office
Kept me at distance from him; and when first
He to this citadel appointed me,
He was sincere and serious in his duty.
I do not then abuse his confidence,
If I preserve my fealty in that
Which to my fealty was first delivered.

BUTLER.

Say, then, will you fulfil the attainder on him,
And lend your aid to take him in arrest?

GORDON (*pauses, reflecting — then as in deep dejection*)

If it be so — if all be as you say —
If he've betrayed the emperor, his master,
Have sold the troops, have purposed to deliver
The strongholds of the country to the enemy —
Yea, truly! — there is no redemption for him!
Yet it is hard, that me the lot should destine
To be the instrument of his perdition;
For we were pages at the court of Bergau
At the same period; but I was the senior.

BUTLER.

I have heard so —

GORDON.

'Tis full thirty years since then.
A youth who scarce had seen his twentieth year
Was Wallenstein, when he and I were friends:
Yet even then he had a daring soul:
His frame of mind was serious and severe
Beyond his years: his dreams were of great objects;
He walked amidst us of a silent spirit,
Communing with himself; yet I have known him
Transported on a sudden into utterance
Of strange conceptions; kindling into splendour
His soul revealed itself, and he spake so
That we looked round perplexed upon each other,
Not knowing whether it were craziness,
Or whether it were a god that spoke in him.

BUTLER.

But was it where he fell two story high
From a window-ledge, on which he had fallen asleep
And rose up free from injury? From this day
(It is reported) he betrayed clear marks
Of a distempered fancy.

GORDON.

He became
Doubtless more self-enwrapped and melancholy ;
He made himself a Catholic.¹ Marvellously
His marvellous preservation had transformed him.
Thenceforth he held himself for an exempted
And privileged being, and, as if he were
Incapable of dizziness or fall,
He ran along the unsteady rope of life.
But now our destinies drove us asunder ;
He paced with rapid step the way of greatness,
Was count, and prince, duke-regent, and dictator,
And now is all, all this too little for him ;
He stretches forth his hands for a king's crown,
And plunges in unfathomable ruin.

BUTLER.

No more, he comes.

SCENE III.

*To these enter WALLENSTEIN, in conversation with the
BURGOMASTER of Egra.*

WALLENSTEIN.

You were at one time a free town. I see
Ye bear the half-eagle in your city arms.
Why the half-eagle only ?

BURGOMASTER.

We were free,
But for the last two hundred years has Egra

¹ It appears that the account of his conversion being caused by such a fall, and other stories of his juvenile character, are not well authenticated.

Remained in pledge to the Bohemian crown;
Therefore we bear the half-eagle, the other half
Being cancelled till the empire ransom us,
If ever that should be.

WALLENSTEIN.

Ye merit freedom.
Only be firm and dauntless. Lend your ears
To no designing whispering court minions.
What may your imposts be?

BURGOMASTER.

So heavy that
We totter under them. The garrison
Lives at our costs.

WALLENSTEIN.

I will relieve you. Tell me,
There are some Protestants among you still?

[*The BURGOMASTER hesitates.*

Yes, yes; I know it. Many lie concealed
Within these walls. Confess now, you yourself —

[*Fixes his eye on him. The BURGOMASTER alarmed.*

Be not alarmed. I hate the Jesuits.
Could my will have determined it they had
Been long ago expelled the empire. Trust me —
Mass-book or Bible, 'tis all one to me.
Of that the world has had sufficient proof.
I built a church for the Reformed in Glogau
At my own instance. Hark ye, burgomaster!
What is your name?

BURGOMASTER.

Pachhalbel, may it please you.

WALLENSTEIN.

Hark ye! But let it go no further, what I now
Disclose to you in confidence.

[*Laying his hand on the BURGOMASTER'S shoulder
with a certain solemnity.*]

The times

Draw near to their fulfilment, burgomaster!
The high will fall, the low will be exalted.
Hark ye! But keep it to yourself! The end
Approaches of the Spanish double monarchy—
A new arrangement is at hand. You saw
The three moons that appeared at once in the heaven?

BURGOMASTER.

With wonder and affright!

WALLENSTEIN.

Whereof did two
Strangely transform themselves to bloody daggers,
And only one, the middle moon, remained
Steady and clear.

BURGOMASTER.

We applied it to the Turks.

WALLENSTEIN.

The Turks! That all? I tell you that two empires
Will set in blood, in the East and in the West,
And Lutherism alone remain.

[*Observing GORDON and BUTLER.*]

I' faith,

'Twas a smart cannonading that we heard
This evening, as we journeyed hitherward:
'Twas on our left hand. Did ye hear it here?

GORDON.

Distinctly. The wind brought it from the south.

BUTLER.

It seemed to come from Weiden or from Neustadt.

WALLENSTEIN.

'Tis likely. That's the route the Swedes are taking.
How strong is the garrison?

GORDON.

Not quite two hundred
Competent men, the rest are invalids.

WALLENSTEIN.

Good! And how many in the vale of Jochim?

GORDON.

Two hundred arquebusiers have I sent thither
To fortify the posts against the Swedes.

WALLENSTEIN.

Good! I commend your foresight. At the works too
You have done somewhat?

GORDON.

Two additional batteries
I caused to be run up. They were needless;
The Rhinegrave presses hard upon us, general!

WALLENSTEIN.

You have been watchful in your emperor's service.
I am content with you, lieutenant-colonel.

[To BUTLER.]

Release the outposts in the vale of Jochim,
With all the stations in the enemy's route.

[*To* GORDON.

Governor, in your faithful hands I leave
My wife, my daughter, and my sister. I
Shall make no stay here, and wait but the arrival
Of letters to take leave of you, together
With all the regiments.

SCENE IV.

To these enter COUNT TERZKY.

TERZKY.

Joy, general, joy! I bring you welcome tidings.

WALLENSTEIN.

And what may they be?

TERZKY.

There has been an engagement
At Neustadt; the Swedes gained the victory.

WALLENSTEIN.

From whence did you receive the intelligence?

TERZKY.

A countryman from Tirschenreut conveyed it.
Soon after sunrise did the fight begin!
A troop of the imperialists from Tachau
Had forced their way into the Swedish camp;
The cannonade continued full two hours;
There were left dead upon the field a thousand
Imperialists, together with their colonel;
Further than this he did not know.

WALLENSTEIN.

How came
Imperial troops at Neustadt? Altringer,
But yesterday, stood sixty miles from there.
Count Gallas' force collects at Frauenburg,
And have not the full complement. Is it possible
That Suys perchance had ventured so far onward?
It cannot be.

TERZKY.

We shall soon know the whole,
For here comes Illo, full of haste, and joyous.

SCENE V.

*To these enter ILLO.*ILLO (*to WALLENSTEIN*).

A courier, duke! he wishes to speak with thee.

TERZKY (*eagerly*).

Does he bring confirmation of the victory?

WALLENSTEIN (*at the same time*).

What does he bring? Whence comes he?

ILLO.

From the Rhinegrave,
And what he brings I can announce to you
Beforehand. Seven leagues distant are the Swedes;
At Neustadt did Max. Piccolomini
Throw himself on them with the cavalry;
A murderous fight took place! o'erpowered by numbers,
The Pappenheimers all, with Max. their leader,
[WALLENSTEIN *shudders and turns pale*.
Were left dead on the field.

WALLENSTEIN (*after a pause, in a low voice*).

Where is the messenger? Conduct me to him.

[WALLENSTEIN is going, when LADY NEUBRUNN rushes into the room. Some servants follow her and run across the stage.

NEUBRUNN.

Help! Help!

ILLO and TERZKY (*at the same time*).

What now?

NEUBRUNN.

The princess!

WALLENSTEIN and TERZKY.

Does she know it?

NEUBRUNN (*at the same time with them*).

She is dying!

[Hurries off the stage, when WALLENSTEIN and TERZKY follow her.

SCENE VI.

BUTLER and GORDON.

GORDON.

What's this?

BUTLER.

She has lost the man she loved —
Young Piccolomini, who fell in the battle.

GORDON.

Unfortunate lady !

BUTLER.

You have heard what Illo
Reporteth, that the Swedes are conquerors,
And marching hitherward.

GORDON.

Too well I heard it.

BUTLER.

They are twelve regiments strong, and there are five
Close by us to protect the duke. We have
Only my single regiment ; and the garrison
Is not two hundred strong.

GORDON.

'Tis even so.

BUTLER.

It is not possible with such small force
To hold in custody a man like him.

GORDON.

I grant it.

BUTLER.

Soon the numbers would disarm us,
And liberate him.

GORDON.

It were to be feared.

BUTLER (*after a pause*).

Know, I am warranty for the event ;
With my head have I pledged myself for his,

Must make my word good, cost it what it will,
And if alive we cannot hold him prisoner,
Why — death makes all things certain !

GORDON.

Butler ! What ?
Do I understand you ? Gracious God ! You could —

BUTLER.

He must not live.

GORDON.

And you can do the deed ?

BUTLER.

Either you or I. This morning was his last.

GORDON.

You would assassinate him ?

BUTLER.

'Tis my purpose.

GORDON.

Who leans with his whole confidence upon you !

BUTLER.

Such is his evil destiny !

GORDON.

Your general !

The sacred person of your general !

BUTLER.

My general he has been.

GORDON.

That 'tis only
An "has been" washes out no villainy,
And without judgment passed.

BUTLER.

The execution
Is here instead of judgment.

GORDON.

This were murder,
Not justice. The most guilty should be heard.

BUTLER.

His guilt is clear, the emperor has passed judgment,
And we but execute his will.

GORDON.

We should not
Hurry to realise a bloody sentence.
A word may be recalled, a life never can be.

BUTLER.

Despatch in service pleases sovereigns.

GORDON.

No honest man's ambitious to press forward
To the hangman's service.

BUTLER.

And no brave man loses
His colour at a daring enterprise.

GORDON.

A brave man hazards life, but not his conscience.

BUTLER.

What then? Shall he go forth anew to kindle
The unextinguishable flame of war?

GORDON.

Seize him, and hold him prisoner — do not kill him.

BUTLER.

Had not the emperor's army been defeated
I might have done so. But 'tis now passed by.

GORDON.

Oh, wherefore opened I the stronghold to him?

BUTLER.

His destiny, and not the place destroys him.

GORDON.

Upon these ramparts, as beseemed a soldier,
I had fallen, defending the emperor's citadel!

BUTLER.

Yes! and a thousand gallant men have perished!

GORDON.

Doing their duty — that adorns the man!
But murder's a black deed, and nature curses it.

BUTLER (*brings out a paper*).

Here is the manifesto which commands us
To gain possession of his person. See —
It is addressed to you as well as me.
Are you content to take the consequences,
If through our fault he escape to the enemy?

GORDON.

I? Gracious God!

BUTLER.

Take it on yourself.
Come of it what may, on you I lay it.

GORDON.

Oh, God in heaven!

BUTLER.

Can you advise aught else
Wherewith to execute the emperor's purpose?
Say if you can. For I desire his fall,
Not his destruction.

GORDON.

Merciful heaven! what must be
I see as clear as you. Yet still the heart
Within my bosom beats with other feelings!

BUTLER.

Mine is of harder stuff! Necessity
In her rough school hath steeled me. And this Illo,
And Terzky likewise, they must not survive him.

GORDON.

I feel no pang for these. Their own bad hearts
Impelled them, not the influence of the stars.
'Twas they who strewed the seeds of evil passions

In his calm breast, and with officious villainy
Watered and nursed the poisonous plants. May they
Receive their earnest to the uttermost mite!

BUTLER.

And their death shall precede his!
We meant to have taken them alive this evening
Amid the merrymaking of a feast,
And keep them prisoners in the citadel,
But this makes shorter work. I go this instant
To give the necessary orders.

SCENE VII.

To these enter ILLO and TERZKY.

TERZKY.

Our luck is on the turn. To-morrow come
The Swedes — twelve thousand gallant warriors, Illo!
Then straightwise for Vienna. Cheerily, friend!
What! meet such news with such a moody face?

ILLO.

It lies with us at present to prescribe
Laws, and take vengeance on those worthless traitors,
Those skulking cowards that deserted us;
One has already done his bitter penance,
The Piccolomini: be his the fate
Of all who wish us evil! This flies sure
To the old man's heart; he has his whole life long
Fretted and toiled to raise his ancient house
From a count's title to the name of prince;
And now must seek a grave for his only son.

BULTER.

'Twas pity, though ! A youth of such heroic
And gentle temperament ! The duke himself,
'Twas easily seen, how near it went to his heart.

ILLO.

Hark ye, old friend ! That is the very point
That never pleased me in our general —
He ever gave the preference to the Italians.
Yea, at this very moment, by my soul !
He'd gladly see us all dead ten times over,
Could he thereby recall his friend to life.

TERZKY.

Hush, hush ! Let the dead rest ! This evening's business
Is, who can fairly drink the other down —
Your regiment, Illo ! gives the entertainment.
Come ! we will keep a merry carnival —
The night for once be day, and 'mid full glasses
Will we expect the Swedish avant-garde.

ILLO.

Yes, let us be of good cheer for to-day,
For there's hot work before us, friends ! This sword
Shall have no rest till it is bathed to the hilt
In Austrian blood.

GORDON.

Shame, shame ! what talk is this,
My lord field-marshal ? Wherefore foam you so
Against your emperor ?

BUTLER.

Hope not too much
From this first victory. Bethink you, sirs !
How rapidly the wheel of fortune turns ;
The emperor still is formidably strong.

ILLO.

The emperor has soldiers, no commander,
For this King Ferdinand of Hungary
Is but a tyro. Gallas? He's no luck,
And was of old the ruiner of armies.
And then this viper, this Octavio,
Is excellent at stabbing in the back,
But ne'er meets Friedland in the open field.

TERZKY.

Trust me, my friends, it cannot but succeed;
Fortune, we know, can ne'er forsake the duke!
And only under Wallenstein can Austria
Be conqueror.

ILLO.

The duke will soon assemble
A mighty army: all come crowding, streaming
To banners, dedicate by destiny
To fame, and prosperous fortune. I behold
Old times come back again! he will become
Once more the mighty lord which he has been.
How will the fools, who've now deserted him,
Look then? I can't but laugh to think of them,
For lands will he present to all his friends,
And like a king and emperor reward
True services; but we've the nearest claims.

[To GORDON.]

You will not be forgotten, governor!
He'll take you from this nest, and bid you shine
In higher station: your fidelity
Well merits it.

GORDON.

I am content already,
And wish to climb no higher; where great height is,
The fall must needs be great. "Great height, great
depth."

ILLO.

Here you have no more business, for to-morrow
The Swedes will take possession of the citadel.
Come, Terzky, it is supper-time. What think you?
Nay, shall we have the town illuminated
In honour of the Swede? And who refuses
To do it is a Spaniard and a traitor.

TERZKY.

Nay! nay! not that, it will not please the duke —

ILLO.

What! we are masters here; no soul shall dare
Avow himself imperial where we've the rule.
Gordon! good night, and for the last time take
A fair leave of the place. Send out patrols
To make secure, the watchword may be altered.
At the stroke of ten deliver in the keys
To the duke himself, and then you've quit for ever
Your wardship of the gates, for on to-morrow
The Swedes will take possession of the citadel.

TERZKY (*as he is going, to BUTLER*).

You come, though, to the castle?

BUTLER.

At the right time.

[*Exeunt* TERZKY and ILLO.]

SCENE VIII.

GORDON *and* BUTLER.GORDON (*looking after them*).

Unhappy men! How free from all foreboding!
They rush into the outspread net of murder
In the blind drunkenness of victory;
I have no pity for their fate. This Illo,
This overflowing and foolhardy villain,
That would fain bathe himself in his emperor's blood.

BUTLER.

Do as he ordered you. Send round patrols,
Take measures for the citadel's security;
When they are within I close the castle gate
That nothing may transpire.

GORDON (*with earnest anxiety*).

Oh! haste not so!

Nay, stop; first tell me —

BUTLER.

You have heard already,
To-morrow to the Swedes belongs. This night
Alone is ours. They make good expedition.
But we will make still greater. Fare you well.

GORDON.

Ah! your looks tell me nothing good. Nay, Butler,
I pray you promise me!

BUTLER.

The sun has set;
A fateful evening doth descend upon us,
And brings on their long night! Their evil stars
Deliver them unarmed into our hands,
And from their drunken dream of golden fortunes
The dagger at their hearts shall rouse them. Well,
The duke was ever a great calculator;
His fellow men were figures on his chess-board
To move and station, as his game required.
Other men's honour, dignity, good name,
Did he shift like pawns, and made no conscience of,
Still calculating, calculating still;
And yet at last his calculation proves
Erroneous; the whole game is lost; and lo!
His own life will be found among the forfeits.

GORDON.

Oh, think not of his errors now! remember
His greatness, his munificence; think on all
The lovely features of his character,
On all the noble exploits of his life,
And let them, like an angel's arm, unseen,
Arrest the lifted sword.

BUTLER.

It is too late.
I suffer not myself to feel compassion,
Dark thoughts and bloody are my duty now.
[Grasping GORDON's hand.
Gordon! 'tis not my hatred (I pretend not
To love the duke, and have no cause to love him).
Yet 'tis not now my hatred that impels me
To be his murderer. 'Tis his evil fate.
Hostile occurrences of many events
Control and subjugate me to the office.

In vain the human being meditates
 Free action. He is but the wire-worked¹ puppet
 Of the blind Power, which out of its own choice,
 Creates for him a dread necessity.
 What too would it avail him if there were
 A something pleading for him in my heart —
 Still I must kill him.

GORDON.

If your heart speak to you,
 Follow its impulse. 'Tis the voice of God.
 Think you your fortunes will grow prosperous
 Bedewed with blood — his blood? Believe it not!

BUTLER.

You know not. Ask not! Wherefore should it happen
 That the Swedes gained the victory, and hasten
 With such forced marches hitherwards? Fain would I
 Have given him to the emperor's mercy. Gordon!
 I do not wish his blood, — but I must ransom
 The honour of my word, — it lies in pledge —
 And he must die, or —

[*Passionately grasping GORDON'S hand.*

Listen, then, and know

I am dishonoured if the duke escape us.

GORDON.

Oh! to save such a man —

BUTLER.

What!

GORDON.

It is worth
 A sacrifice. Come, friend! Be noble-minded!

¹ We doubt the propriety of putting so blasphemous a statement in the mouth of any character. — T.

Our own heart, and not other men's opinions,
Forms our true honour.

BUTLER (*with a cold and haughty air*).

He is a great lord,
This duke, and I am of but mean importance.
This is what you would say! Wherein concerns it
The world at large, you mean to hint to me,
Whether the man of low extraction keeps
Or blemishes his honour —
So that the man of princely rank be saved?
We all do stamp our value on ourselves:
The price we challenge for ourselves is given us.
There does not live on earth the man so stationed
That I despise myself compared with him.
Man is made great or little by his own will;
Because I am true to mine therefore he dies!

GORDON.

I am endeavouring to move a rock.
Thou hadst a mother, yet no human feelings.
I cannot hinder you, but may some God
Rescue him from you! [*Exit* GORDON.

BUTLER ¹ (*alone*).

I treasured my good name all my life long;
The duke has cheated me of life's best jewel,
So that I blush before this poor weak Gordon!
He prizes above all his fealty;
His conscious soul accuses him of nothing;
In opposition to his own soft heart
He subjugates himself to an iron duty.

¹ This soliloquy, which, according to the former arrangement, constituted the whole of scene ix., and concluded the fourth act, is omitted in all the printed German editions. It seems probable that it existed in the original manuscript from which Mr. Coleridge translated. — Ed.

Me in a weaker moment passion warped ;
 I stand beside him, and must feel myself
 The worst man of the two. What though the world
 Is ignorant of my purposed treason, yet
 One man does know it, and can prove it, too —
 High-minded Piccolomini !
 There lives the man who can dishonour me !
 This ignominy blood alone can cleanse !
 Duke Friedland, thou or I. Into my own hands
 Fortune delivers me. The dearest thing a man has is
 himself.

SCENE IX.

[*A Gothic and gloomy apartment at the DUCHESS
 FRIEDLAND'S. THEKLA on a seat, pale, her
 eyes closed. The DUCHESS and LADY NEU-
 BRUNN busied about her. WALLENSTEIN and
 the COUNTESS in conversation.*]

WALLENSTEIN.

How knew she it so soon ?

COUNTESS.

She seems to have
 Foreboded some misfortune. The report
 Of an engagement, in which had fallen
 A colonel of the imperial army, frightened her.
 I saw it instantly. She flew to meet
 The Swedish courier, and with sudden questioning
 Soon wrested from him the disastrous secret.
 Too late we missed her, hastened after her ;
 We found her lying in his arms, all pale,
 And in a swoon.

WALLENSTEIN.

A heavy, heavy blow !
And she so unprepared ! Poor child ! how is it ?
[*Turning to the DUCHESS.*
Is she coming to herself ?

DUCHESS.

Her eyes are opening.

COUNTESS.

She lives !

THEKLA (*looking around her*).

Where am I ?

WALLENSTEIN (*steps to her, raising her up in his arms*).
Come, cheerly, Thekla ! be my own brave girl !
See, there's thy loving mother. Thou art in
Thy father's arms.

THEKLA (*standing up*).

Where is he ? Is he gone ?

DUCHESS.

Who gone, my daughter ?

THEKLA.

He — the man who uttered
That word of misery.

DUCHESS.

Oh, think not of it !

My Thekla !

WALLENSTEIN.

Give her sorrow leave to talk !
Let her complain — mingle your tears with hers,
For she hath suffered a deep anguish ; but
She'll rise superior to it, for my Thekla
Hath all her father's unsubdued heart.

THEKLA.

I am not ill. See, I have power to stand.
Why does my mother weep ? Have I alarmed her ?
It is gone by — I recollect myself.
[She casts her eyes round the room, as seeking some one.]
Where is he ? Please you, do not hide him from me.
You see I have strength enough : now I will hear him.

DUCHESS.

No ; never shall this messenger of evil
Enter again into thy presence, Thekla !

THEKLA.

My father —

WALLENSTEIN.

Dearest daughter !

THEKLA.

I'm not weak.
Shortly I shall be quite myself again.
You'll grant me one request ?

WALLENSTEIN.

Name it, my daughter.

THEKLA.

Permit the stranger to be called to me,
And grant me leave, that by myself I may
Hear his report and question him.

DUCHESS.

No, never!

COUNTESS.

Tis not advisable — assent not to it.

WALLENSTEIN.

Hush! Wherefore wouldst thou speak with him, my
daughter?

THEKLA.

Knowing the whole, I shall be more collected;
I will not be deceived. My mother wishes
Only to spare me. I will not be spared —
The worst is said already: I can hear
Nothing of deeper anguish!

COUNTESS *and* DUCHESS.

Do it not.

THEKLA.

The horror overpowered me by surprise,
My heart betrayed me in the stranger's presence:
He was a witness of my weakness, yea,
I sank into his arms; and that has shamed me.
I must replace myself in his esteem,
And I must speak with him, perforce, that he,
The stranger, may not think ungently of me.

WALLENSTEIN.

I see she is in the right, and am inclined
To grant her this request of hers. Go, call him.
[LADY NEUBRUNN goes to call him.]

DUCHESS.

But I, thy mother, will be present —

THEKLA.

'Twere
More pleasing to me if alone I saw him;
Trust me, I shall behave myself the more
Collectedly.

WALLENSTEIN.

Permit her her own will.
Leave her alone with him: for there are sorrows,
Where of necessity the soul must be
Its own support. A strong heart will rely
On its own strength alone. In her own bosom,
Not in her mother's arms, must she collect
The strength to rise superior to this blow.
It is mine own brave girl. I'll have her treated
Not as the woman, but the heroine. [Going.]

COUNTESS (*detaining him*).

Where art thou going? I heard Terzky say
That 'tis thy purpose to depart from hence
To-morrow early, but to leave us here.

WALLENSTEIN.

Yes, ye stay here, placed under the protection
Of gallant men.

COUNTESS.

Oh, take us with you, brother.
Leave us not in this gloomy solitude.

To brood o'er anxious thoughts. The mists of doubt
Magnify evils to a shape of horror.

WALLENSTEIN.

Who speaks of evil? I entreat you, sister,
Use words of better omen.

COUNTESS.

Then take us with you.
Oh, leave us not behind you in a place
That forces us to such sad omens. Heavy
And sick within me is my heart —
These walls breath on me like a churchyard vault.
I cannot tell you, brother, how this place
Doth go against my nature. Take us with you.
Come, sister, join you your entreaty! Niece,
Yours too. We all entreat you, take us with you!

WALLENSTEIN.

The place's evil omens will I change,
Making it that which shields and shelters for me
My best beloved.

LADY NEUBRUNN (*returning*).

The Swedish officer.

WALLENSTEIN.

Leave her alone with me. *him*

DUCHESS (*to THEKLA, who starts and shivers*).

There — pale as death! Child, 'tis impossible
That thou shouldst speak with him. Follow thy
mother.

THEKLA.

The Lady Neubrunn then may stay with me.

[*Exeunt* DUCHESS and COUNTESS.]

SCENE X.

THEKLA, THE SWEDISH CAPTAIN, LADY NEUBRUNN.

CAPTAIN (*respectfully approaching her*).

Princess — I must entreat your gentle pardon —
My inconsiderate rash speech. How could I —

THEKLA (*with dignity*).

You have beheld me in my agony.
A most distressful accident occasioned
You from a stranger to become at once
My confidant.

CAPTAIN.

I fear you hate my presence,
For my tongue spake a melancholy word.

THEKLA.

The fault is mine. Myself did wrest it from you.
The horror which came o'er me interrupted
Your tale at its commencement. May it please you,
Continue it to the end.

CAPTAIN.

Princess, 'twill

Renew your anguish.

THEKLA.

I am firm, —

I will be firm. Well — how began the engagement?

CAPTAIN.

We lay, expecting no attack, at Neustadt,
 Intrenched but insecurely in our camp,
 When toward evening rose a cloud of dust
 From the wood thitherward ; our vanguard fled
 Into the camp, and sounded the alarm.
 Scarce had we mounted ere the Pappenheimers,
 Their horses at full speed, broke through the lines,
 And leaped the trenches ; but their heedless courage
 Had borne them onward far before the others —
 The infantry were still at distance, only
 The Pappenheimers followed daringly
 Their daring leader —

[THEKLA betrays agitation in her gestures. The officer pauses till she makes a sign to him to proceed.]

Both in van and flanks
 With our whole cavalry we now received them ;
 Back to the trenches drove them, where the foot
 Stretched out a solid ridge of pikes to meet them.
 They neither could advance, nor yet retreat ;
 And as they stood on every side wedged in,
 The Rhinegrave to their leader called aloud,
 Inviting a surrender ; but their leader,
 Young Piccolomini —

[THEKLA, as giddy, grasps a chair.
 Known by his plume,

And his long hair, gave signal for the trenches ;
 Himself leaped first : the regiment all plunged after.
 His charger, by a halbert gored, reared up,
 Flung him with violence off, and over him
 The horses, now no longer to be curbed, —

[THEKLA, who has accompanied the last speech with all the marks of increasing agony, trembles through her whole frame and is falling. The LADY NEUBRUNN runs to her, and receives her in her arms.]

NEUBRUNN.

My dearest lady —

CAPTAIN.

I retire.

THEKLA.

'Tis over,

Proceed to the conclusion.

CAPTAIN.

Wild despair

Inspired the troops with frenzy when they saw
Their leader perish; every thought of rescue
Was spurned; they fought like wounded tigers; their
Frantic resistance roused our soldiery;
A murderous fight took place, nor was the contest
Finished before their last man fell.

THEKLA (*faltering*).

And where —

Where is — you have not told me all.

CAPTAIN (*after a pause*).

This morning

We buried him. Twelve youths of noblest birth
Did bear him to interment; the whole army
Followed the bier. A laurel decked his coffin;
The sword of the deceased was placed upon it,
In mark of honour by the Rhinegrave's self;
Nor tears were wanting, for there are among us
Many, who had themselves experienced
The greatness of his mind and gentle manners;
All were affected at his fate. The Rhinegrave
Would willingly have saved him; but himself
Made vain the attempt — 'tis said he wished to die.

NEUBRUNN (*to THEKLA, who has hidden her countenance*).

Look up, my dearest lady —

THEKLA.

Where is his grave ?

CAPTAIN.

At Neustadt, lady ; in a cloister church
Are his remains deposited, until
We can receive directions from his father.

THEKLA.

What is the cloister's name ?

CAPTAIN.

St. Catherine's.

THEKLA.

And how far is it thither ?

CAPTAIN.

Near twelve leagues.

THEKLA.

And which the way ?

CAPTAIN.

You go by Tirschenreut
And Falkenburg, through our advanced posts.

THEKLA.

Who

Is their commander ?

CAPTAIN.

Colonel Seckendorf.

[THEKLA steps to the table, and takes a ring from a casket.

THEKLA.

You have beheld me in my agony,
And shown a feeling heart. Please you, accept
[Giving him the ring.
A small memorial of this hour. Now go!

CAPTAIN (*confusedly*).

Princess —

[THEKLA silently makes signs to him to go, and turns from him. The captain lingers, and is about to speak. LADY NEUBRUNN repeats the signal, and he retires.

SCENE XI.

THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN.

THEKLA (*falls on* LADY NEUBRUNN'S neck).

Now gentle Neubrunn, show me the affection
Which thou hast ever promised — prove thyself
My own true friend and faithful fellow pilgrim.
This night we must away!

NEUBRUNN.

Away! and whither?

THEKLA.

Whither! There is but one place in the world.
Thither, where he lies buried! To his coffin!

NEUBRUNN.

What would you do there?

THEKLA.

What do there?

That wouldst thou not have asked, hadst thou e'er loved.
There, that is all that still remains of him!
That single spot is the whole earth to me.

NEUBRUNN.

That place of death —

THEKLA.

Is now the only place
Where life yet dwells for me: detain me not!
Come and make preparations; let us think
Of means to fly from hence.

NEUBRUNN.

Your father's rage —

THEKLA.

That time is past —
And now I fear no human being's rage.

NEUBRUNN.

The sentence of the world! The tongue of calumny!

THEKLA.

Whom am I seeking? Him who is no more.
Am I then hastening to the arms — O God!
I haste but to the grave of the beloved.

NEUBRUNN.

And we alone, two helpless, feeble women?

THEKLA.

We will take weapons: my arm shall protect thee.

NEUBRUNN.

In the dark night-time?

THEKLA.

Darkness will conceal us.

NEUBRUNN.

This rough tempestuous night —

THEKLA.

Had he a soft bed
Under the hoofs of his war-horses?

NEUBRUNN.

Heaven!
And then the many posts of the enemy!

THEKLA.

They are human beings. Misery travels free
Through the whole earth.

NEUBRUNN.

The journey's weary length —

THEKLA.

The pilgrim, travelling to a distant shrine
Of hope and healing, doth not count the leagues.

NEUBRUNN.

How can we pass the gates?

THEKLA.

Gold opens them.

Go, do but go.

NEUBRUNN.

Should we be recognised —

THEKLA.

In a despairing woman, a poor fugitive,
Will no one seek the daughter of Duke Friedland.

NEUBRUNN.

And where procure we horses for our flight?

THEKLA.

My equerry procures them. Go and fetch him.

NEUBRUNN.

Dares he, without the knowledge of his lord?

THEKLA.

He will. Go, only go. Delay no longer.

NEUBRUNN.

Dear lady! and your mother?

THEKLA.

Oh! my mother!

NEUBRUNN.

So much as she has suffered too already;
Your tender mother. Ah! how ill prepared
For this last anguish!

THEKLA.

Woe is me! my mother! [*Pauses.*

Go instantly.

NEUBRUNN.

But think! what you are doing!

THEKLA.

What can be thought, already has been thought.

NEUBRUNN.

And being there, what purpose you to do?

THEKLA.

There a divinity will prompt my soul.

NEUBRUNN.

Your heart, dear lady, is disquieted!
And this is not the way that leads to quiet.

THEKLA.

To a deep quiet, such as he has found,
It draws me on, I know not what to name it,
Resistless does it draw me to his grave.
There will my heart be eased, my tears will flow.
Oh, hasten, make no further questioning!
There is no rest for me till I have left
These walls — they fall in on me — a dim power
Drives me from hence — oh, mercy! What a feeling!
What pale and hollow forms are those! They fill,

They crowd the place! I have no longer room here!
 Mercy! Still more! More still! The hideous swarm,
 They press on me; they chase me from these walls —
 Those hollow, bodiless forms of living men!

NEUBRUNN.

You frighten me so, lady, that no longer
 I dare stay here myself. I go and call
 Rosenberg instantly. [Exit LADY NEUBRUNN.]

SCENE XII.

THEKLA.

His spirit 'tis that calls me: 'tis the troop
 Of his true followers, who offered up
 Themselves to avenge his death: and they accuse me
 Of an ignoble loitering — they would not
 Forsake their leader even in his death; they died for
 him,
 And shall I live?
 For me too was that laurel garland twined
 That decks his bier. Life is an empty casket:
 I throw it from me. Oh, my only hope!
 To die beneath the hoofs of trampling steeds —
 That is a lot of heroes upon earth! [Exit THEKLA.¹
(*The curtain drops.*)

¹The soliloquy of Thekla consists in the original of six and twenty lines, twenty of which are in rhymes of irregular recurrence. I thought it prudent to abridge it. Indeed the whole scene between Thekla and Lady Neubrunn might, perhaps, have been omitted without injury to the play. — C.

SCENE XIII.

THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN, *and* ROSENBERG.

NEUBRUNN.

He is here, lady, and he will procure them.

THEKLA.

Wilt thou provide us horses, Rosenberg?

ROSENBERG.

I will, my lady.

THEKLA.

And go with us as well?

ROSENBERG.

To the world's end, my lady.

THEKLA.

But consider,
Thou never canst return unto the duke.

ROSENBERG.

I will remain with thee.

THEKLA.

I will reward thee,
And will commend thee to another master.
Canst thou unseen conduct us from the castle?

ROSENBERG.

I can.

THEKLA.

When can I go ?

ROSENBERG.

This very hour.

But whither would you, lady ?

THEKLA.

To — Tell him, Neubrunn.

NEUBRUNN.

To Neustadt.

ROSENBERG.

So ; I leave you to get ready. [Exit.

NEUBRUNN.

Oh, see, your mother comes.

THEKLA.

Indeed ! O Heaven !

SCENE XIV.

THEKLA, LADY NEUBRUNN, *the* DUCHESS.

DUCHESS.

He's gone ! I find thee more composed, my child.

THEKLA.

I am so, mother ; let me only now
Retire to rest, and Neubrunn here be with me.
I want repose.

DUCHESS.

My Thekla, thou shalt have it.
I leave thee now consoled, since I can calm
Thy father's heart.

THEKLA.

Good night, beloved mother!
[*Falling on her neck and embracing her with deep
emotion.*]

DUCHESS.

Thou scarcely art composed e'en now, my daughter.
Thou tremblest strongly, and I feel thy heart
Beat audibly on mine.

THEKLA.

Sleep will appease
Its beating: now good night, good night, dear mother.
(*As she withdraws from her mother's arms the curtain
falls.*)

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Butler's Chamber

BUTLER, and MAJOR GERALDIN.

BUTLER.

Find me twelve strong dragoons, arm them with pikes.
For there must be no firing —
Conceal them somewhere near the banquet-room,
And soon as the dessert is served up, rush all in
And cry — "Who is loyal to the emperor?"
I will overturn the table — while you attack

Illo and Terzky, and despatch them both.
The castle-palace is well barred and guarded,
That no intelligence of this proceeding
May make its way to the duke. Go instantly;
Have you yet sent for Captain Devereux
And the Macdonald?

GERALDIN.

They'll be here anon.

[*Exit* GERALDIN.]

BUTLER.

Here's no room for delay. The citizens
Declare for him — a dizzy drunken spirit
Possesses the whole town. They see in the duke
A prince of peace, a founder of new ages
And golden times. Arms, too, have been given out
By the town-council, and a hundred citizens
Have volunteered themselves to stand on guard.
Despatch! then, be the word; for enemies
Threaten us from without and from within.

SCENE II.

BUTLER, CAPTAIN DEVEREUX, *and* MACDONALD.

MACDONALD.

Here we are, general.

DEVEREUX.

What's to be the watchword?

BUTLER.

Long live the emperor!

BOTH (*recoiling*).

How?

BUTLER.

Live the house of Austria.

DEVEREUX.

Have we not sworn fidelity to Friedland?

MACDONALD.

Have we not marched to this place to protect him?

BUTLER.

Protect a traitor and his country's enemy?

DEVEREUX.

Why, yes! in his name you administered
Our oath.

MACDONALD.

And followed him yourself to Egra.

BUTLER.

I did it the more surely to destroy him.

DEVEREUX.

So, then!

MACDONALD.

An altered case!

BUTLER (*to DEVEREUX*).

Thou wretched man,
So easily leavest thou thy oath and colours?

DEVEREUX.

The devil! I but followed your example;
If you could prove a villain, why not we?

MACDONALD.

We've naught to do with thinking — that's your business.

You are our general, and give out the orders;
We follow you, though the track lead to hell.

BUTLER (*appeased*).

Good, then! we know each other.

MACDONALD.

I should hope so.

DEVEREUX.

Soldiers of fortune are we — who bids most
He has us.

MACDONALD.

'Tis e'en so!

BUTLER.

Well, for the present
You must remain honest and faithful soldiers.

DEVEREUX.

We wish no other.

BUTLER.

Ay, and make your fortunes.

MACDONALD.

That is still better.

BUTLER.

Listen!

BOTH.

We attend.

BUTLER.

It is the emperor's will and ordinance
To seize the person of the Prince-Duke Friedland
Alive or dead.

DEVEREUX.

It runs so in the letter.

MACDONALD.

Alive or dead — these were the very words.

BUTLER.

And he shall be rewarded from the state
In land and gold who proffers aid thereto.

DEVEREUX.

Ay! that sounds well. The words sound always well
That travel hither from the court. Yes! yes!
We know already what court-words import.
A golden chain perhaps in sign of favour,
Or an old charger, or a parchment-patent,
And such like. The prince-duke pays better.

MACDONALD.

Yes,

The duke's a splendid paymaster.

BOTH.

Us!

BUTLER.

You, Captain Devereux, and thee, Macdonald.

DEVEREUX (*after a pause*).

Choose you some other.

BUTLER.

What! art dastardly?

Thou, with full thirty lives to answer for —
Thou conscientious of a sudden?

DEVEREUX.

Nay,
To assassinate our lord and general —

MACDONALD.

To whom we swore a soldier's oath —

BUTLER.

The oath

Is null, for Friedland is a traitor.

DEVEREUX.

No, no! it is too bad!

MACDONALD.

Yes, by my soul!

It is too bad. One has a conscience too —

DEVEREUX.

If it were not our chieftain, who so long
Has issued the commands, and claimed our duty —

BUTLER.

Is that the objection ?

DEVEREUX.

Were it my own father,
And the emperor's service should demand it of me,
It might be done perhaps — but we are soldiers,
And to assassinate our chief commander,
That is a sin, a foul abomination,
From which no monk or confessor absolves us.

BUTLER.

I am your pope, and give you absolution.
Determine quickly !

DEVEREUX.

'Twill not do.

MACDONALD.

'Twon't do.

BUTLER.

Well, off then ! and — send Pestalutz to me.

DEVEREUX (*hesitates*).

The Pestalutz —

MACDONALD.

What may you want with him ?

BUTLER.

If you reject it, we can find enough —

DEVEREUX.

Nay, if he must fall, we may earn the bounty
As well as any other. What think you,
Brother Macdonald ?

MACDONALD.

Why, if he must fall,
And will fall, and it can't be otherwise,
One would not give place to this Pestalutz.

DEVEREUX (*after some reflection*).

When do you purpose he should fall?

BUTLER.

This night.

To-morrow will the Swedes be at our gates.

DEVEREUX.

You take upon you all the consequences?

BUTLER.

I take the whole upon me.

DEVEREUX.

And it is
The emperor's will, his express absolute will?
For we have instances that folks may like
The murder, and yet hang the murderer.

BUTLER.

The manifesto says — "alive or dead."
Alive — 'tis not possible — you see it is not.

DEVEREUX.

Well, dead then! dead! But how can we come at him?
The town is filled with Terzky's soldiery.

MACDONALD.

Ay! and then Terzky still remains, and Illo —

BUTLER.

With these you shall begin — you understand me?

DEVEREUX.

How? And must they too perish?

BUTLER.

They the first.

MACDONALD.

Hear, Devereux! A bloody evening this.

DEVEREUX.

Have you a man for that? Commission me —

BUTLER.

'Tis given in trust to Major Geraldin;
This is a carnival night, and there's a feast
Given at the castle — there we shall surprise them,
And hew them down. The Pestalutz and Lesley
Have that commission. Soon as that is finished —

DEVEREUX.

Hear, general! It will be all one to you —
Hark ye, let me exchange with Geraldin.

BUTLER.

'Twill be the lesser danger with the duke.

DEVEREUX.

Danger! The devil! What do you think me, general,
'Tis the duke's eye, and not his sword, I fear.

BUTLER.

What can his eye do to thee?

DEVEREUX.

Death and hell !

Thou knowest that I'm no milksop, general !
But 'tis not eight days since the duke did send me
Twenty gold pieces for this good warm coat
Which I have on ! and then for him to see me
Standing before him with the pike, his murderer,
That eye of his looking upon this coat —
Why — why — the devil fetch me ! I'm no milksop !

BUTLER.

The duke presented thee this good warm coat,
And thou, a needy wight, hast pangs of conscience
To run him through the body in return.
A coat that is far better and far warmer
Did the emperor give to him, the prince's mantle.
How doth he thank the emperor ? With revolt
And treason.

DEVEREUX.

That is true. The devil take
Such thankers ! I'll despatch him.

BUTLER.

And would'st quiet
Thy conscience, thou hast naught to do but simply
Pull off the coat ; so canst thou do the deed
With light heart and good spirits.

DEVEREUX.

You are right.

That did not strike me. I'll pull off the coat —
So there's an end of it.

MACDONALD.

Yes, but there's another
Point to be thought of.

BUTLER.

And what's that, Macdonald?

MACDONALD.

What avails sword or dagger against him?
He is not to be wounded — he is —

BUTLER (*starting up*).

What!

MACDONALD.

Safe against shot, and stab, and flash! Hard frozen,
Secured and warranted by the black art!
His body is impenetrable, I tell you.

DEVEREUX.

In Ingolstadt there was just such another:
His whole skin was the same as steel; at last
We were obliged to beat him down with gunstocks.

MACDONALD.

Hear what I'll do.

DEVEREUX.

Well?

MACDONALD.

In the cloister here
There's a Dominican, my countryman.
I'll make him dip my sword and pike for me
In holy water, and say over them

One of his strongest blessings. That's *probatum* !
Nothing can stand 'gainst that.

BUTLER.

So do, Macdonald !
But now go and select from out the regiment
Twenty or thirty able-bodied fellows,
And let them take the oaths to the emperor.
Then when it strikes eleven, when the first rounds
Are passed, conduct them silently as may be
To the house. I will myself be not far off.

DEVEREUX.

But how do we get through Hartschier and Gordon,
That stand on guard there in the inner chamber?

BUTLER.

I have made myself acquainted with the place,
I lead you through a back door that's defended
By one man only. Me my rank and office
Give access to the duke at every hour.
I'll go before you — with one poniard-stroke
Cut Hartschier's windpipe, and make way for you.

DEVEREUX.

And when we are there, by what means shall we gain
The duke's bedchamber, without his alarming
The servants of the court ? for he has here
A numerous company of followers.

BUTLER.

The attendants fill the right wing : he hates bustle
And lodges in the left wing quite alone.

DEVEREUX.

Were it well over — hey, Macdonald! I
Feel queerly on the occasion, devil knows.

MACDONALD.

And I, too. 'Tis too great a personage.
People will hold us for a brace of villains.

BUTLER.

In plenty, honour, splendour — you may safely
Laugh at the people's babble.

DEVEREUX.

If the business
Squares with one's honour — if that be quite certain.

BUTLER.

Set your hearts quite at ease. Ye save for Ferdinand
His crown and empire. The reward can be
No small one.

DEVEREUX.

And 'tis his purpose to dethrone the emperor?

BUTLER.

Yes! Yes! to rob him of his crown and life.

DEVEREUX.

And must he fall by the executioner's hands,
Should we deliver him up to the emperor
Alive?

BUTLER.

It were his certain destiny.

DEVEREUX.

Well! Well! Come then, Macdonald, he shall not
Lie long in pain.

[*Exeunt BUTLER through one door, MACDONALD and
DEVEREUX through the other.*

SCENE III.

*A saloon, terminated by a gallery, which extends far
into the background.*

WALLENSTEIN *sitting at a table.* The SWEDISH CAP-
TAIN *standing before him.*

WALLENSTEIN.

Commend me to your lord. I sympathise
In his good fortune; and if you have seen me
Deficient in the expressions of that joy,
Which such a victory might well demand,
Attribute it to no lack of good will,
For henceforth are our fortunes one. Farewell,
And for your trouble take my thanks. To-morrow
The citadel shall be surrendered to you
On your arrival.

[*The SWEDISH CAPTAIN retires. WALLENSTEIN sits
lost in thought, his eyes fixed vacantly, and his
head sustained by his hand. The COUNTESS
TERZKY enters, stands before him for awhile,
unobserved by him; at length he starts, sees
her and recollects himself.*

WALLENSTEIN.

Comest thou from her? Is she restored? How is
she?

COUNTESS.

My sister tells me she was more collected
After her conversation with the Swede.
She has now retired to rest.

WALLENSTEIN.

The pang will soften,
She will shed tears.

COUNTESS.

I find thee altered, too,
My brother! After such a victory
I had expected to have found in thee
A cheerful spirit. Oh, remain thou firm!
Sustain, uphold us! For our light thou art,
Our sun.

WALLENSTEIN.

Be quiet. I ail nothing. Where's
Thy husband?

COUNTESS.

At a banquet — he and Illo.

WALLENSTEIN (*rises and strides across the saloon*).
The night's far spent. Betake thee to thy chamber.

COUNTESS.

Bid me not go, oh, let me stay with thee!

WALLENSTEIN (*moves to the window*).

There is a busy motion in the heaven,
The wind doth chase the flag upon the tower,
Fast sweep the clouds, the sickle¹ of the moon,

¹ These four lines are expressed in the original with exquisite felicity:

Struggling, darts snatches of uncertain light.
 No form of star is visible! That one
 White stain of light, that single glimmering yonder,
 Is from Cassiopeia, and therein
 Is Jupiter. (*A pause.*) But now
 The blackness of the troubled element hides him!
*[He sinks into profound melancholy, and looks
 vacantly into the distance.]*

COUNTESS (*looks on him mournfully, then grasps his
 hand.*).

What art thou brooding on?

WALLENSTEIN.

Methinks
 If I but saw him, 'twould be well with me.
 He is the star of my nativity,
 And often marvellously hath his aspect
 Shot strength into my heart.

COUNTESS.

Thou'lt see him again.

“Am Himmel ist geschäftige Bewegung.
 Des Thurmes Fahne jagt der Wind, schnell geht
 Der Wolken Zug, die Mondessichel wankt,
 Und durch die Nacht zuckt ungewisse Helle.”

The word “moon-sickle” reminds me of a passage in Harris, as quoted by Johnson, under the word “falcated.” “The enlightened part of the moon appears in the form of a sickle or reaping-hook, which is while she is moving from the conjunction to the opposition, or from the new moon to the full: but from full to a new again the enlightened part appears gibbous, and the dark *falcated*.”

The words “wanken” and “schweben” are not easily translated. The English words by which we attempt to render them are either vulgar or pedantic, or not of sufficiently general application. So “der Wolken Zug”—the draft, the procession of clouds. The masses of the clouds sweep onward in swift *stream*.

WALLENSTEIN (*remains for awhile with absent mind, then assumes a livelier manner, and turning suddenly to the COUNTESS*).

See him again? Oh, never, never again!

COUNTESS.

How?

WALLENSTEIN.

He is gone — is dust.

COUNTESS.

Whom meanest thou, then?

WALLENSTEIN.

He, the more fortunate! yea, he hath finished!
For him there is no longer any future;
His life is bright — bright without spot it was,
And cannot cease to be. No ominous hour
Knocks at his door with tidings of mishap,
Far off is he, above desire and fear;
No more submitted to the change and chance
Of the unsteady planets. Oh, 'tis well
With him! but who knows what the coming hour
Veiled in thick darkness brings us?

COUNTESS.

Thou speakest
Of Piccolomini. What was his death?
The courier had just left thee as I came.
[WALLENSTEIN *by a motion of his hand makes signs to her to be silent*.
Turn not thine eyes upon the backward view,
Let us look forward into sunny days,
Welcome with joyous heart the victory,
Forget what it has cost thee. Not to-day,

For the first time, thy friend was to thee dead ;
To thee he died when first he parted from thee.

WALLENSTEIN.

This anguish will be wearied down,¹ I know ;
What pang is permanent with man ? From the highest,
As from the vilest thing of every day,
He learns to wean himself : for the strong hours
Conquer him. Yet I feel what I have lost
In him. The bloom is vanished from my life,
For oh, he stood beside me, like my youth,
Transformed for me the real to a dream,
Clothing the palpable and the familiar
With golden exhalations of the dawn.
Whatever fortunes wait my future toils,
The beautiful is vanished — and returns not.

COUNTESS.

Oh, be not treacherous to thy own power.
Thy heart is rich enough to vivify
Itself. Thou lovest and prizest virtues in him,
The which thyself didst plant, thyself unfold.

WALLENSTEIN (*stepping to the door*).

Who interrupts us now at this late hour ?
It is the governor. He brings the keys
Of the citadel. 'Tis midnight. Leave me, sister !

¹ A very inadequate translation of the original :

“Verschmerzen werd' ich diesen Schlag, das weiss ich,
Denn was verschmerzte nicht der Mensch !”

LITERALLY.

“I shall *grieve down* this blow, of that I'm conscious :
What does not man *grieve down* ?”

COUNTESS.

Oh, 'tis so hard to me this night to leave thee;
A boding fear possesses me!

WALLENSTEIN.

Fear! Wherefore?

COUNTESS.

Shouldst thou depart this night, and we at waking
Never more find thee!

WALLENSTEIN.

Fancies!

COUNTESS.

Oh, my soul
Has long been weighed down by these dark forebodings,
And if I combat and repel them waking,
They still crush down upon my heart in dreams.
I saw thee, yesternight, with thy first wife
Sit at a banquet, gorgeously attired.

WALLENSTEIN.

This was a dream of favourable omen,
That marriage being the founder of my fortunes.

COUNTESS.

To-day I dreamed that I was seeking thee
In thy own chamber. As I entered, lo!
It was no more a chamber: the Chartreuse
At Gitschin 'twas, which thou thyself hast founded,
And where it is thy will that thou shouldst be
Interred.

WALLENSTEIN.

Thy soul is busy with these thoughts.

COUNTESS.

What ! dost thou not believe that oft in dreams
A voice of warning speaks prophetic to us ?

WALLENSTEIN.

There is no doubt that there exist such voices,
Yet I would not call them
Voices of warning that announce to us
Only the inevitable. As the sun,
Ere it is risen, sometimes paints its image
In the atmosphere, so often do the spirits
Of great events stride on before the events,
And in to-day already walks to-morrow.
That which we read of the fourth Henry's death
Did ever vex and haunt me like a tale
Of my own future destiny. The king
Felt in his breast the phantom of the knife
Long ere Ravailac armed himself therewith.
His quiet mind forsook him ; the phantasma
Started him in his Louvre, chased him forth
Into the open air ; like funeral knells
Sounded that coronation festival ;
And still with boding sense he heard the tread
Of those feet that even then were seeking him
Throughout the streets of Paris.

COUNTESS.

And to thee

The voice within thy soul bodes nothing ?

WALLENSTEIN.

Nothing.

Be wholly tranquil.

COUNTESS.

And another time

I hastened after thee, and thou rann'st from me
Through a long suite, through many a spacious hall.
There seemed no end of it; doors creaked and clapped;
I followed panting, but could not overtake thee;
When on a sudden did I feel myself
Grasped from behind, — the hand was cold that grasped
me;
'Twas thou, and thou didst kiss me, and there seemed
A crimson covering to envelop us.

WALLENSTEIN.

That is the crimson tapestry of my chamber.

COUNTESS (*gazing on him*).

If it should come to that — if I should see thee,
Who standest now before me in the fulness
Of life — [She falls on his breast and weeps.

WALLENSTEIN.

The emperor's proclamation weighs upon thee —
Alphabets wound not — and he finds no hands.

COUNTESS.

If he should find them, my resolve is taken —
I bear about me my support and refuge.

[Exit COUNTESS.]

SCENE IV.

WALLENSTEIN, GORDON.

WALLENSTEIN.

All quiet in the town?

GORDON.

The town is quiet.

WALLENSTEIN.

I hear a boisterous music! and the castle
Is lighted up. Who are the revellers?

GORDON.

There is a banquet given at the castle
To the Count Terzky and Field-Marshal Illo.

WALLENSTEIN.

In honour of the victory — this tribe
Can show their joy in nothing else but feasting.

[*Rings. The GROOM OF THE CHAMBER enters*
Unrobe me. I will lay me down to sleep.

[*WALLENSTEIN takes the keys from GORDON.*

So we are guarded from all enemies,
And shut in with sure friends.

For all must cheat me, or a face like this

[*Fixing his eyes on GORDON.*

Was ne'er a hypocrite's mask.

[*The GROOM OF THE CHAMBER takes off his mantle, collar, and scarf.*

WALLENSTEIN.

Take care — what is that?

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER.

The golden chain is snapped in two.

WALLENSTEIN.

Well, it has lasted long enough. Here — give it.

[*He takes and looks at the chain.*

'Twas the first present of the emperor.
 He hung it round me in the war of Friule,
 He being then archduke ; and I have worn it
 Till now from habit —
 From superstition, if you will. Belike,
 It was to be a talisman to me ;
 And while I wore it on my neck in faith,
 It was to chain to me all my life long
 The volatile fortune, whose first pledge it was.
 Well, be it so ! Henceforward a new fortune
 Must spring up for me ; for the potency
 Of this charm is dissolved.

[GROOM OF THE CHAMBER *retires with the vestments.* WALLENSTEIN *rises, takes a stride across the room, and stands at last before GORDON in a posture of meditation.*

How the old time returns upon me ! I
 Behold myself once more at Burgau, where
 We two were pages of the court together.
 We oftentimes disputed : thy intention
 Was ever good ; but thou wert wont to play
 The moralist and preacher, and wouldst rail at me —
 That I strove after things too high for me,
 Giving my faith to bold, unlawful dreams,
 And still extol to me the golden mean.
 Thy wisdom hath been proved a thriftless friend
 To thy own self. See, it has made thee early
 A superannuated man, and (but
 That my munificent stars will intervene)
 Would let thee in some miserable corner
 Go out like an untended lamp.

GORDON.

My prince !
 With light heart the poor fisher moors his boat,
 And watches from the shore the lofty ship
 Stranded amid the storm.

WALLENSTEIN.

Art thou already
In harbour, then, old man? Well! I am not.
The unconquered spirit drives me o'er life's billows;
My planks still firm, my canvas swelling proudly.
Hope is my goddess still, and youth my inmate;
And while we stand thus front to front almost,
I might presume to say, that the swift years
Have passed by powerless o'er my unblanched hair.

*[He moves with long strides across the saloon, and
remains on the opposite side over against
GORDON.]*

Who now persists in calling fortune false?
To me she has proved faithful; with fond love
Took me from out the common ranks of men,
And, like a mother goddess, with strong arm
Carried me swiftly up the steps of life.
Nothing is common in my destiny,
Nor in the furrows of my hand. Who dares
Interpret then my life for me as 'twere
One of the undistinguishable many?
True, in this present moment I appear
Fallen low indeed; but I shall rise again.
The high flood will soon follow on this ebb;
The fountain of my fortune, which now stops,
Repressed and bound by some malicious star,
Will soon in joy play forth from all its pipes.

GORDON.

And yet remember I the good old proverb,
"Let the night come before we praise the day."
I would be slow from long-continued fortune
To gather hope: for hope is the companion
Given to the unfortunate by pitying heaven.
Fear hovers round the head of prosperous men,
For still unsteady are the scales of fate.

WALLENSTEIN (*smiling*).

I hear the very Gordon that of old
Was wont to preach, now once more preaching;
I know well, that all sublunary things
Are still the vassals of vicissitude.
The unpropitious gods demand their tribute.
This long ago the ancient pagans knew:
And therefore of their own accord they offered
To themselves injuries, so to atone
The jealousy of their divinities:
And human sacrifices bled to Typhon.

[*After a pause, serious, and in a more subdued manner.*

I too have sacrificed to him — for me
There fell the dearest friend, and through my fault
He fell! No joy from favourable fortune
Can overweigh the anguish of this stroke.
The envy of my destiny is glutted:
Life pays for life. On his pure head the lightning
Was drawn off which would else have shattered me.

SCENE V.

To these enter SENI.

WALLENSTEIN.

Is not that Seni? and beside himself,
If one can trust his looks? What brings thee hither
At this late hour, Baptista?

SENI.

Terror, duke!

On thy account.

WALLENSTEIN.

What now?

SENI.

Flee ere the day break!
Trust not thy person to the Swedes!

WALLENSTEIN.

What now
Is in thy thoughts?

SENI (*with louder voice*).

Trust not thy person to the Swedes.

WALLENSTEIN.

What is it, then?

SENI (*still more urgently*).

Oh, wait not the arrival of these Swedes!
An evil near at hand is threatening thee
From false friends. All the signs stand full of horror!
Near, near at hand the network of perdition —
Yea, even now 'tis being cast around thee!

WALLENSTEIN.

Baptista, thou art dreaming! — fear befools thee.

SENI.

Believe not that an empty fear deludes me.
Come, read it in the planetary aspects;
Read it thyself, that ruin threatens thee
From false friends.

WALLENSTEIN.

From the falseness of my friends
Has risen the whole of my unprosperous fortunes.
The warning should have come before! At present

I need no revelation from the stars
To know that.

SEN.

Come and see ! trust thine own eyes.
A fearful sign stands in the house of life —
An enemy ; a fiend lurks close behind
The radiance of thy planet. Oh, be warned !
Deliver not up thyself to these heathens,
To wage a war against our holy church.

WALLENSTEIN (*laughing gently*).

The oracle rails that way ! Yes, yes ! Now
I recollect. This junction with the Swedes
Did never please thee — lay thyself to sleep,
Baptista ! Signs like these I do not fear.

GORDON (*who during the whole of this dialogue has
shown marks of extreme agitation, and now turns
to WALLENSTEIN*).

My duke and general ! May I dare presume ?

WALLENSTEIN.

Speak freely.

GORDON.

What if 'twere no mere creation
Of fear, if God's high providence vouchsafed
To interpose its aid for your deliverance,
And made that mouth its organ ?

WALLENSTEIN.

Ye're both feverish !
How can mishap come to me from the Swedes ?
They sought this junction with me — 'tis their interest.

GORDON (*with difficulty suppressing his emotion*).

But what if the arrival of these Swedes —
What if this were the very thing that winged
The ruin that is flying to your temples?

[*Flings himself at his feet.*]

There is yet time, my prince.

SENI.

Oh, hear him! hear him!

GORDON (*rises*).

The Rhinegrave's still far off. Give but the orders,
This citadel shall close its gates upon him.
If then he will besiege us, let him try it.
But this I say: he'll find his own destruction,
With his whole force before these ramparts, sooner
Than weary down the valour of our spirit.
He shall experience what a band of heroes,
Inspired by an heroic leader,
Is able to perform. And if indeed
It be thy serious wish to make amend
For that which thou hast done amiss, — this, this
Will touch and reconcile the emperor,
Who gladly turns his heart to thoughts of mercy;
And Friedland, who returns repentant to him,
Will stand yet higher in his emperor's favour
Than e'er he stood when he had never fallen.

WALLENSTEIN (*contemplates him with surprise, remains silent awhile, betraying strong emotion*).

Gordon — your zeal and fervour lead you far.
Well, well — an old friend has a privilege.
Blood, Gordon, has been flowing. Never, never
Can the emperor pardon me: and if he could,
Yet I — I ne'er could let myself be pardoned.
Had I foreknown what now has taken place,
That he, my dearest friend, would fall for me,

My first death offering; and had the heart
 Spoken to me, as now it has done — Gordon,
 It may be, I might have bethought myself.
 It may be, too, I might not. Might or might not
 Is now an idle question. All too seriously
 Has it begun to end in nothing, Gordon!
 Let it then have its course. [*Stepping to the window.*
 All dark and silent — at the castle too
 All is now hushed. Light me, chamberlain!

[*The GROOM OF THE CHAMBER, who had entered during the last dialogue, and had been standing at a distance and listening to it with visible expressions of the deepest interest, advances in extreme agitation and throws himself at the DUKE'S feet.*

And thou too! But I know why thou dost wish
 My reconciliation with the emperor.
 Poor man! he hath a small estate in Carinthia,
 And fears it will be forfeited because
 He's in my service. Am I then so poor
 That I no longer can indemnify
 My servants? Well! to no one I employ
 Means of compulsion. If 'tis thy belief
 That fortune has fled from me, go! forsake me.
 This night for the last time mayst thou unrobe me,
 And then go over to the emperor.
 Gordon, good night! I think to make a long
 Sleep of it: for the struggle and the turmoil
 Of this last day or two was great. May't please you!
 Take care that they awake me not too early.

[*Exit WALLENSTEIN, the GROOM OF THE CHAMBER lighting him. SENI follows, GORDON remains on the darkened stage, following the DUKE with his eye, till he disappears at the further end of the gallery: then by his gestures the old man expresses the depth of his anguish, and stands leaning against a pillar.*

SCENE VI.

GORDON, BUTLER (*at first behind the scenes*).

BUTLER (*not yet come into view of the stage*).

Here stand in silence till I give the signal.

GORDON (*starts up*).

'Tis he! he has already brought the murderers.

BUTLER.

The lights are out. All lies in profound sleep.

GORDON.

What shall I do? shall I attempt to save him?
Shall I call up the house? alarm the guards?

BUTLER (*appears, but scarcely on the stage*).

A light gleams hither from the corridor.
It leads directly to the duke's bedchamber.

GORDON.

But then I break my oath to the emperor;
If he escape and strengthen the enemy,
Do I not hereby call down on my head
All the dread consequences?

BUTLER (*stepping forward*).

Hark! Who speaks there?

GORDON.

'Tis better, I resign it to the hands
Of Providence. For what am I, that I

Should take upon myself so great a deed ?
I have not murdered him, if he be murdered ;
But all his rescue were my act and deed ;
Mine — and whatever be the consequences
I must sustain them.

BUTLER (*advances*).

I should know that voice.

GORDON.

Butler

BUTLER.

'Tis Gordon. What do you want here ?
Was it so late, then, when the duke dismissed you ?

GORDON.

Your hand bound up and in a scarf ?

BUTLER.

'Tis wounded.
That Illo fought as he were frantic, till
At last we threw him on the ground.

GORDON (*shuddering*).

Both dead ?

BUTLER.

Is he in bed ?

GORDON.

Ah, Butler !

BUTLER.

Is he ? speak.

GORDON.

He shall not perish! Not through you! The heaven
Refuses your arm. See — 'tis wounded!

BUTLER.

There is no need of my arm.

GORDON.

The most guilty
Have perished, and enough is given to justice.

[*The GROOM OF THE CHAMBER advances from the
gallery with his finger on his mouth com-
manding silence.*]

GORDON.

He sleeps! Oh, murder not the holy sleep!

BUTLER.

No! he shall die awake. [*Is going.*]

GORDON.

His heart still cleaves
To earthly things: he's not prepared to step
Into the presence of his God!

BUTLER (*going*).

God's merciful!

GORDON (*holds him*).

Grant him but this night's respite.

BUTLER (*hurrying off*).

The next moment

May ruin all.

GORDON (*holds him still*).

One hour! —

BUTLER.

Unhold me! What
Can that short respite profit him?

GORDON.

Oh, time
Works miracles. In one hour many thousands
Of grains of sand run out; and quick as they
Thought follows thought within the human soul.
Only one hour! Your heart may change its purpose,
His heart may change its purpose — some new tidings
May come; some fortunate event, decisive,
May fall from heaven and rescue him. Oh, what
May not one hour achieve!

BUTLER.

You but remind me
How precious every minute is!

[*He stamps on the floor.*]

SCENE VII.

*To these enter MACDONALD and DEVEREUX with the
HALBERDIERS.*

GORDON (*throwing himself between him and them*).

No, monster!
First over my dead body thou shalt tread.
I will not live to see the accursed deed!

BUTLER (*forcing him out of the way*).

Weak-hearted dotard!

[*Trumpets are heard in the distance.*]

DEVEREUX *and* MACDONALD.

Hark! The Swedish trumpets!
The Swedes before the ramparts! Let us hasten!

GORDON (*rushes out*).

Oh, God of mercy!

BUTLER (*calling after him*).

Governor, to your post!

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER (*hurries in*).

Who dares make larum here? Hush! The duke sleeps.

DEVEREUX (*with loud, harsh voice*).

Friend, it is time now to make larum.

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER.

Help!

Murder!

BUTLER.

Down with him!

GROOM OF THE CHAMBER (*run through the body by
DEVEREUX, falls at the entrance of the gallery*).

Jesus Maria!

BUTLER.

Burst the doors open.

[*They rush over the body into the gallery — two
doors are heard to crash one after the other.
Voices, deadened by the distance — clash of
arms — then all at once a profound silence.*]

SCENE VIII.

COUNTESS TERZKY (*with a light*).

Her bedchamber is empty; she herself
Is nowhere to be found! The Neubrunn too,
Who watched by her, is missing. If she should
Be flown — but whither flown? We must call up
Every soul in the house. How will the duke
Bear up against these worst bad tidings? Oh,
If that my husband now were but returned
Home from the banquet! Hark! I wonder whether
The duke is still awake! I thought I heard
Voices and tread of feet here! I will go
And listen at the door. Hark! what is that?
'Tis hastening up the steps!

SCENE IX.

COUNTESS, GORDON.

GORDON (*rushes in out of breath*).

'Tis a mistake!
'Tis not the Swedes; ye must proceed no further —
Butlér! Oh, God! where is he?

[*Observing the COUNTESS.*
Countess! Say —

COUNTESS.

You are come, then, from the castle? Where's my
husband?

GORDON (*in an agony of affright*).

Your husband! Ask not! To the duke —

COUNTESS.

Not till

You have discovered to me —

GORDON.

On this moment

Does the world hang. For God's sake! to the duke.

While we are speaking — [*Calling loudly.*

Butler! Butler! God!

COUNTESS.

Why, he is at the castle with my husband.

[*BUTLER comes from the gallery.*

GORDON.

'Twas a mistake. 'Tis not the Swedes — it is

The imperialists' lieutenant-general

Has sent me hither — will be here himself

Instantly. You must not proceed.

BUTLER.

He comes

Too late. [GORDON *dashes himself against the wall.*

GORDON.

Oh, God of mercy!

COUNTESS.

What, too late?

Who will be here himself? Octavio

In Egra? Treason! Treason! Where's the duke?

[*She rushes to the gallery.*

SCENE X.

Servants run across the stage full of terror. The whole scene must be spoken entirely without pauses.

SENI (*from the gallery*).

Oh, bloody, frightful deed!

COUNTESS.

What is it, Seni?

PAGE (*from the gallery*).

Oh, piteous sight!

[*Other servants hasten in with torches.*]

COUNTESS.

What is it? For God's sake!

SENI.

And do you ask?

Within the duke lies murdered — and your husband
Assassinated at the castle.

[*The COUNTESS stands motionless.*]

FEMALE SERVANT (*running across the stage*).

Help! help! the duchess!

BURGOMASTER (*enters*).

What mean these confused
Loud cries that wake the sleepers of this house?

GORDON.

Your house is cursed to all eternity.
In your house doth the duke lie murdered!

BURGOMASTER (*rushing out*).

Heaven forbid!

FIRST SERVANT.

Fly! fly! they murder us all!

SECOND SERVANT (*carrying silver plate*).

That way! the lower
Passages are blocked up.

VOICE (*from behind the scene*).

Make room for the lieutenant-general!

[*At these words the COUNTESS starts from her stupor, collects herself, and retires suddenly.*]

VOICE (*from behind the scene*).

Keep back the people! Guard the door!

SCENE XI.

To these enter OCTAVIO PICCOLOMINI with all his train.

At the same time DEVEREUX and MACDONALD enter from out the corridor with the HALBERDIERS.

WALLENSTEIN'S dead body is carried over the back part of the stage, wrapped in a piece of crimson tapestry.

OCTAVIO (*entering abruptly*).

It must not be! It is not possible!
Butler! Gordon!

I'll not believe it. Say no!

[GORDON, *without answering, points with his hand to the body of WALLENSTEIN as it is carried over the back of the stage.* OCTAVIO looks that way, and stands overpowered with horror.

DEVEREUX (*to BUTLER*).

Here is the golden fleece — the duke's sword —

MACDONALD.

Is it your order —

BUTLER (*pointing to OCTAVIO*).

Here stands he who now
Hath the whole power to issue orders.

[DEVEREUX and MACDONALD *retire with marks of obeisance. One drops away after the other, till only BUTLER, OCTAVIO, and GORDON remain on the stage.*

OCTAVIO (*turning to BUTLER*).

Was that my purpose, Butler, when we parted?
Oh, God of Justice!
To Thee I lift my hand! I am not guilty
Of this foul deed.

BUTLER.

Your hand is pure. You have
Availed yourself of mine.

OCTAVIO.

Merciless man!
Thus to abuse the orders of thy lord —
And stain thy emperor's holy name with murder,
With bloody, most accursed assassination!

BUTLER (*calmly*).

I've but fulfilled the emperor's own sentence.

OCTAVIO.

Oh, curse of kings,
Infusing a dread life into their words,
And linking to the sudden, transient thought
The unchanging, irrevocable deed.
Was there necessity for such an eager
Despatch? Couldst thou not grant the merciful
A time for mercy? Time is man's good angel.
To leave no interval between the sentence,
And the fulfilment of it, doth beseem
God only, the immutable!

BUTLER.

For what

Rail you against me? What is my offence?
The empire from a fearful enemy
Have I delivered, and expect reward.
The single difference betwixt you and me
Is this: you placed the arrow in the bow;
I pulled the string. You sowed blood, and yet stand
Astonished that blood is come up. I always
Knew what I did, and therefore no result
Hath power to frighten or surprise my spirit.
Have you aught else to order? for this instant
I make my best speed to Vienna; place
My bleeding sword before my emperor's throne,
And hope to gain the applause which undelaying
And punctual obedience may demand
From a just judge.

[*Exit* BUTLER.]

SCENE XII.

*To these enter the COUNTESS TERZKY, pale and disordered.
Her utterance is slow and feeble, and unimpassioned.*

OCTAVIO (*meeting her*).

Oh, Countess Terzky! These are the results
Of luckless, unblest deeds.

COUNTESS.

They are the fruits
Of your contrivances. The duke is dead,
My husband too is dead, the duchess struggles
In the pangs of death, my niece has disappeared;
This house of splendour, and of princely glory,
Doth now stand desolated: the affrighted servants
Rush forth through all its doors. I am the last
Therein: I shut it up, and here deliver
The keys.

OCTAVIO (*with a deep anguish*).

Oh, countess! my house, too, is desolate.

COUNTESS.

Who next is to be murdered? Who is next
To be maltreated? Lo! the duke is dead.
The emperor's vengeance may be pacified!
Spare the old servants; let not their fidelity
Be imputed to the faithful as a crime —
The evil destiny surprised my brother
Too suddenly: he could not think on them.

OCTAVIO.

Speak not of vengeance! Speak not of maltreatment!
The emperor is appeased; the heavy fault

Hath heavily been expiated — nothing
Descended from the father to the daughter,
Except his glory and his services. .
The empress honours your adversity,
Takes part in your afflictions, opens to you
Her motherly arms. Therefore no further fears.
Yield yourself up in hope and confidence
To the imperial grace !

COUNTESS (*with her eye raised to heaven*).

To the grace and mercy of a greater master
Do I yield up myself. Where shall the body
Of the duke have its place of final rest ?
In the Chartreuse, which he himself did found
At Gitschin, rests the Countess Wallenstein ;
And by her side, to whom he was indebted
For his first fortunes, gratefully he wished
He might sometime repose in death ! Oh, let him
Be buried there. And likewise, for my husband's
Remains I ask the like grace. The emperor
Is now the proprietor of all our castles ;
This sure may well be granted us — one sepulchre
Beside the sepulchres of our forefathers !

OCTAVIO.

Countess, you tremble, you turn pale !

COUNTESS (*reassembles all her powers, and speaks with
energy and dignity*).

You think

More worthily of me than to believe
I would survive the downfall of my house.
We did not hold ourselves too mean to grasp
After a monarch's crown — the crown did fate
Deny, but not the feeling and the spirit
That to the crown belong ! We deem a

Courageous death more worthy of our free station
Than a dishonoured life. I have taken poison.

OCTAVIO.

Help! Help! Support her!

COUNTESS.

Nay, it is too late.
In a few moments is my fate accomplished.

[Exit COUNTESS.]

GORDON.

Oh, house of death and horrors!

[An OFFICER enters, and brings a letter with the great seal. GORDON steps forward and meets him.]

What is this!

It is the imperial seal.

[He reads the address, and delivers the letter to OCTAVIO with a look of reproach, and with an emphasis on the word.]

To the Prince Piccolomini.

[OCTAVIO, with his whole frame expressive of sudden anguish, raises his eyes to heaven.]

(The curtain drops.)

Wallenstein's Camp

Preface

"THE Camp of Wallenstein," by its vivid portraiture of the state of the general's army, gives the best clue to the spell of his gigantic power. The blind belief entertained in the unflinching success of his arms, and in the supernatural agencies by which that success is secured to him; the unrestrained indulgence of every passion, and utter disregard of all law, save that of the camp; a hard oppression of the peasantry and plunder of the country, have all swollen the soldiery with an idea of interminable sway. But as we have translated the whole, we shall leave these reckless marauders to speak for themselves.

Of Schiller's opinion concerning the "Camp," as a necessary introduction to the tragedy, the following passage, taken from the prologue to the first representation, will give a just idea, and may also serve as a motto to the work:

"Not he it is, who on the tragic scene
Will now appear — but in the fearless bands
Whom his command alone could sway, and whom
His spirit fired, you may his shadow see,
Until the bashful Muse shall dare to bring
Himself before you in a living form;
For power it was that bore his heart astray.
His 'Camp,' alone, elucidates his crime."

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

SERGEANT-MAJOR, } of a regiment of Terzky's carabineers.
TRUMPETER, }
ARTILLERYMAN.
SHARPSHOOTERS.
MOUNTED YAGERS, of Holk's corps.
DRAGOONS, of Butler's regiment.
ARQUEBUSIERS, of Tiefenbach's regiment.
CUIRASSIER, of a Walloon regiment.
CUIRASSIER, of a Lombard regiment.
CROATS.
HULANS.
RECRUIT.
CITIZEN.
PEASANT.
PEASANT BOY.
CAPUCHIN.
REGIMENTAL SCHOOLMASTER.
SUTLER - WOMAN.
SERVANT - GIRL.
SOLDIER BOYS.
MUSICIANS.

SCENE. — *The Camp before Pilsen in Bohemia.*

Wallenstein's Camp

SCENE I.

Sutlers' tents — in front, a Slop-shop. Soldiers of all colours and uniforms thronging about. Tables all filled. Croats and Hulans cooking at a fire. Sutler-woman serving out wine. Soldier-boys throwing dice on a drum-head. Singing heard from the tent.

Enter a Peasant and his Son.

SON.

Father, I fear it will come to harm,
So let us be off from this soldier swarm ;
But boist'rous mates will ye find in the shoal —
'Twere better to bolt while our skins are whole.

FATHER.

How now, boy ! the fellows won't eat us, though
They may be a little unruly or so.
See, yonder, arriving a stranger train,
Fresh comers are they from the Saal and Mayne ;
Much booty they bring of the rarest sort —
'Tis ours, if we cleverly drive our sport.
A captain, who fell by his comrade's sword,
This pair of sure dice to me transferred ;
To-day I'll just give them a trial to see

If their knack's as good as it used to be.
You must play the part of a pitiful devil,
For these roaring rogues, who so loosely revel,
Are easily smoothed, and tricked, and flattered,
And, free as it came, their gold is scattered.
But we — since by bushels our all is taken,
By spoonfuls must ladle it back again;
And, if with their swords they slash so highly,
We must look sharp, boy, and do them slyly.

[Singing and shouting in the tent.]

Hark, how they shout! God help the day!
'Tis the peasant's hide for their sport must pay.
Eight months in our beds and stalls have they
Been swarming here, until far around
Not a bird or a beast is longer found,
And the peasant, to quiet his craving maw,
Has nothing now left but his bones to gnaw.
Ne'er were we crushed with a heavier hand,
When the Saxon was lording it o'er the land:
And these are the emperor's troops, they say!

SON.

From the kitchen a couple are coming this way,
Not much shall we make by such blades as they.

FATHER.

They're born Bohemian knaves — the two —
Belonging to Terzky's carabineers,
Who've lain in these quarters now for years;
The worst are they of the worthless crew.
Strutting, swaggering, proud and vain,
They seem to think they may well disdain
With the peasant a glass of his wine to drain.
But, soft — to the left o' the fire I see
Three riflemen, who from the Tyrol should be.
Emmerick, come, boy, to them will we.

Birds of this feather 'tis luck to find,
Whose trim's so spruce, and their purse well lined.
[*They move toward the tent.*]

SCENE II.

The above. Sergeant-Major, Trumpeter, Hulan.

TRUMPETER.

What would the boor? Out, rascal, away!

PEASANT.

Some victuals and drink, worthy masters, I pray,
For not a warm morsel we've tasted to-day.

TRUMPETER.

Ay, guzzle and guttle — 'tis always the way.

HULAN (*with a glass*).

Not broken your fast! there — drink, ye hound!

[*He leads the peasant to the tent — the others come forward.*]

SERGEANT (*to the Trumpeter*).

Think ye they've done it without good ground?
Is it likely they double our pay to-day,
Merely that we may be jolly and gay?

TRUMPETER.

Why, the duchess arrives to-day, we know,
And her daughter too —

SERGEANT.

Tush ! that's mere show —
'Tis the troops collected from other lands
Who here at Pilsen have joined our bands —
We must do the best we can t' allure 'em,
With plentiful rations, and thus secure 'em,
Where such abundant fare they find,
A closer league with us to bind.

TRUMPETER.

Yes ! — there's something in the wind.

SERGEANT.

The generals and commanders too —

TRUMPETER.

A rather ominous sight, 'tis true.

SERGEANT.

Who're met together so thickly here —

TRUMPETER.

Have plenty of work on their hands, that's clear.

SERGEANT.

The whispering and sending to and fro —

TRUMPETER.

Ay ! Ay !

SERGEANT.

The big-wig from Vienna, I trow,
Who since yesterday's seen to prowl about
In his golden chain of office there —
Something's at the bottom of this, I'll swear

TRUMPETER.

A bloodhound is he beyond a doubt,
By whom the duke's to be hunted out.

SERGEANT.

Mark ye well, man! — they doubt us now,
And they fear the duke's mysterious brow;
He hath clomb too high for them, and fain
Would they beat him down from his perch again.

TRUMPETER.

But we will hold him still on high —
That all would think as you and I!

SERGEANT.

Our regiment, and the other four
Which Terzky leads — the bravest corps
Throughout the camp, are the general's own,
And have been trained to the trade by himself alone.
The officers hold their command of him,
And are all his own, or for life or limb.

SCENE III.

Enter Croat with a necklace. Sharpshooter following him. The above.

SHARPSHOOTER.

Croat, where stole you that necklace, say?
Get rid of it, man — for thee 'tis unmeet:
Come, take these pistols in change, I pray.

CROAT.

Nay, nay, Master Shooter, you're trying to cheat.

SHARPSHOOTER.

Then I'll give you this fine blue cap as well,
 A lottery prize which just I've won :
 Look at the cut of it — quite the swell !

CROAT (*twirling the necklace in the sun*).

But this is of pearls and of garnets bright,
 See, how it plays in the sunny light !

SHARPSHOOTER (*taking the necklace*).

Well, I'll give you to boot, my own canteen —
 I'm in love with this bauble's beautiful sheen.
[Looks at it.

TRUMPETER.

See, now ! — how cleanly the Croat is *done* :
 Snacks ! Master Shooter, and *mum's* the word.

CROAT (*having put on the cap*).

I think your cap is a smartish one.

SHARPSHOOTER (*winking to the Trumpeter*).

'Tis a regular swop, as these gents have heard.

SCENE IV.

The above. An Artilleryman.

ARTILLERYMAN (*to the Sergeant*).

How is this, I pray, brother carabineer ?
 Shall we longer stay here, our fingers warming,
 While the foe in the field around is swarming ?

SERGEANT.

Art thou, indeed, in such hasty fret?
Why, the roads, as I think, are scarce passable yet.

ARTILLERYMAN.

For me they are not — I'm snug enough here —
But a courier's come, our wits to waken
With the precious news that Ratisbon's taken.

TRUMPETER.

Ha! then we soon shall have work in hand.

SERGEANT.

Indeed! to protect the Bavarian's land,
Who hates the duke, as we understand,
We won't put ourselves in a violent sweat.

ARTILLERYMAN.

Heyday! — you'll find you're a wiseacre yet.

SCENE V.

*The above. Two Yagers. Afterward Sutler-woman,
Soldier-boy, Schoolmaster, Servant-girl.*

FIRST YAGER.

See! See!

Here meet we a jovial company!

TRUMPETER.

Who can these greencoats be, I wonder,
That strut so gay and sprucely yonder!

SERGEANT.

They're the Yagers of Holk — and the lace they wear,
I'll be sworn, was ne'er purchased at Leipzig fair.

SUTLER - WOMAN (*bringing wine*).

Welcome, good sirs!

FIRST YAGER.

Zounds, how now!

Gustel of Blasewitz here, I vow!

SUTLER - WOMAN.

The same in sooth — and you, I know,
Are the lanky Peter of Itzeho:
Who at Glückstadt once, in revelling night,
With the wags of our regiment, put to flight
All his father's shiners — then crowned the fun —

FIRST YAGER.

By changing his pen for a rifle-gun.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

We're old acquaintance, then, 'tis clear.

FIRST YAGER.

And to think we should meet in Bohemia here!

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Oh, here to-day — to-morrow yonder —
As the rude war-broom, in restless trace,
Scatters and sweeps us from place to place.
Meanwhile I've been doomed far round to wander.

FIRST YAGER.

So one would think, by the look of your face.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Up the country I've rambled to Temsewar,
Whither I went with the baggage-car,
When Mansfeld before us we chased away;
With the duke near Stralsund next we lay,
Where trade went all to pot, I may say.
I jogged with the succours to Mantua;
And back again came, under Feria:
Then, joining a Spanish regiment,
I took a short cut across to Ghent;
And now to Bohemia I'm come to get
Old scores paid off, that are standing yet,
If a helping hand by the duke be lent —
And yonder you see my sutler's tent.

FIRST YAGER.

Well, all things seem in a flourishing way,
But what have you done with the Scotchman, say,
Who once in the camp was your constant flame?

SUTLER - WOMAN.

A villain, who tricked me clean, that same.
He bolted, and took to himself whate'er
I'd managed to scrape together, or spare,
Leaving me naught but the urchin there.

SOLDIER - BOY (*springing forward*).

Mother, is it my papa you name?

FIRST YAGER.

Well, the emperor now must father this elf,
For the army must ever recruit itself.

SCHOOLMASTER.

Forth to the school, ye rogue — d'ye hear?

FIRST YAGER.

He, too, of a narrow room has fear.

SERVANT GIRL (*entering*).

Aunt, they'll be off.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

I come apace.

FIRST YAGER.

What gypsy is that with the roguish face?

SUTLER - WOMAN.

My sister's child from the south, is she.

FIRST YAGER.

Ay, ay, a sweet little niece — I see.

SECOND YAGER (*holding the girl*).

Softly, my pretty one! stay with me.

GIRL.

The customers wait, sir, and I must go.

[*Disengages herself, and exit.*]

FIRST YAGER.

That maiden's a dainty morsel, I trow!
And her aunt — by heaven! I mind me well,
When the best of the regiment loved her so,
To blows for her beautiful face they fell.

What different folks one's doomed to know !
How time glows off with a ceaseless flow !
And what sights as yet we may live to see !

[*To the Sergeant and Trumpeter.*]

Your health, good sirs, may we be free,
A seat beside you here to take ?

SCENE VI.

The Yagers, Sergeant, and Trumpeter.

SERGEANT.

We thank ye — and room will gladly make.
To Bohemia welcome.

FIRST YAGER.

Snug enough here !
In the land of the foe our quarters were queer.

TRUMPETER.

You haven't the look on't — you're spruce to view.

SERGEANT.

Ay, faith, on the Saal, and in Meissen, too,
Your praises are heard from the lips of few.

SECOND YAGER.

Tush, man ! why, what the plague d'ye mean ?
The Croat had swept the fields so clean,
There was little or nothing for us to glean.

TRUMPETER.

Yet your pointed collar is clean and sightly,
And, then, your hose that sit so tightly !

Your linen so fine, with the hat and feather,
Make a show of smartness altogether!

[*To Sergeant.*

That fortune should upon younkers shine —
While nothing in your way comes, or mine.

SERGEANT.

But then we're the Friedlander's regiment
And, thus, may honour and homage claim.

FIRST YAGER.

For us, now, that's no great compliment,
We, also, bear the Friedlander's name.

SERGEANT.

True — you form part of the general mass.

FIRST YAGER.

And you, I suppose, are a separate class!
The difference lies in the coats we wear,
And I have no wish to change with you there!

SERGEANT.

Sir Yager, I can't but with pity melt,
When I think how much among boors you've dwelt.
The clever knack and the proper tone
Are caught by the general's side alone.

FIRST YAGER.

Then the lesson is wofully thrown away, —
How he hawks and spits, indeed, I may say
You've copied and caught in the cleverest way;
But his spirit, his genius — oh, these, I ween,
On your guard parade are but seldom seen.

SECOND YAGER.

Why, zounds ! ask for us wherever you will,
Friedland's wild hunt is our title still !
Never shaming the name, all undaunted we go
Alike through the field of a friend or a foe ;
Through the rising stalk, or the yellow corn,
Well know they the blast of Holk's Yager horn.
In the flash of an eye, we are far or near,
Swift as the deluge, or there or here —
As at midnight dark, when the flames outbreak
In the silent dwelling where none awake ;
Vain is the hope in weapons or flight,
Nor order nor discipline thwart its might.
Then struggles the maid in our sinewy arms,
But war hath no pity, and scorns alarms.
Go, ask — I speak not with boastful tongue —
In Bayreuth, Westphalia, Voigtland, where'er
Our troops have traversed — go, ask them there —
Children and children's children long,
When hundreds and hundreds of years are o'er,
Of Holk will tell and his Yager corps.

SERGEANT.

Why, hark ! Must a soldier then be made
By driving this riotous, roaring trade !
'Tis drilling that makes him, skill and sense —
Perception — thought — intelligence.

FIRST YAGER.

'Tis liberty makes him ! Here's a fuss !
That I should such twaddle as this discuss.
Was it for this that I left the school ?
That the scribbling desk, and the slavish rule,
And the narrow walls, that our spirits cramp,
Should be met with again in the midst of the camp ?
No ! Idle and heedless, I'll take my way,

Hunting for novelty every day ;
Trust to the moment with dauntless mind,
And give not a glance or before or behind.
For this to the emperor I sold my hide,
That no other care I might have to bide.
Through the foe's fierce firing bid me ride,
Through fathomless Rhine, in his roaring flow,
Where ev'ry third man to the devil may go,
At no bar will you find me boggling there ;
But, farther than this, 'tis my special prayer,
That I may not be bothered with aught like care.

SERGEANT.

If this be your wish, you needn't lack it,
'Tis granted to all with the soldier's jacket.

FIRST YAGER.

What a fuss and a bother, forsooth, was made
By that man-tormentor, Gustavus, the Swede,
Whose camp was a church, where prayers were said
At morning réveille and evening tattoo ;
And, whenever it chanced that we frisky grew,
A sermon himself from the saddle he'd read.

SERGEANT.

Ay, that was a man with the fear of God.

FIRST YAGER.

Girls he detested ; and what's rather odd,
If caught with a wench you in wedlock were tacked,—
I could stand it no longer, so off I packed.

SERGEANT.

Their discipline now has a trifle slacked.

FIRST YAGER.

Well, next to the League I rode over; their men
Were mustering in haste against Magdeburg then.
Ha! that was another guess sort of a thing!
In frolic and fun we'd a glorious swing;
With gaming, and drinking, and girls at call,
I' faith, sirs, our sport was by no means small.
For Tilly knew how to command, that's plain;
He held himself in but gave us the rein;
And, long as he hadn't the bother of paying,
"Live and let live!" was the general's saying.
But fortune soon gave him the slip; and ne'er
Since the day of that villainous Leipzig affair
Would aught go aright. 'Twas of little avail
That we tried, for our plans were sure to fail.
If now we drew nigh and rapped at the door,
No greeting awaited, 'twas opened no more;
From place to place we went sneaking about,
And found that their stock of respect was out;
Then touched I the Saxon bounty, and thought
Their service with fortune must needs be fraught.

SERGEANT.

You joined them then just in the nick to share
Bohemia's plunder?

FIRST YAGER.

I'd small luck there.
Strict discipline sternly ruled the day,
Nor dared we a foeman's force display;
They set us to guard the imperial forts,
And plagued us all with the farce of the courts.
War they waged as a jest 'twere thought —
And but half a heart to the business brought,
They would break with none; and thus 'twas plain
Small honour among them could a soldier gain.

So heartily sick in the end grew I
That my mind was the desk again to try;
When suddenly, rattling near and far,
The Friedlander's drum was heard to war.

SERGEANT.

And how long here may you mean to stay?

FIRST YAGER.

You jest, man. So long as *he* bears the sway,
By my soul! not a thought of change have I;
Where better than here could the soldier lie?
Here the true fashion of war is found,
And the cut of power's on all things round;
While the spirit whereby the movement's given
Mightily stirs, like the winds of heaven,
The meanest trooper in all the throng,
With a hearty step shall I tramp along,
On a burgher's neck as undaunted tread
As our general does on the prince's head.
As 'twas in the times of old 'tis now,
The sword is the sceptre, and all must bow.
One crime alone can I understand,
And that's to oppose the word of command.
What's not forbidden to do make bold,
And none will ask you what creed you hold.
Of just two things in this world I wot,
What belongs to the army and what does not,
To the banner alone is my service brought.

SERGEANT.

Thus, Yager, I like thee — thou speakest, I vow,
With the tone of a Friedland trooper now.

FIRST YAGER.

'Tis not as an office he holds command,
Or a power received from the emperor's hand ;
For the emperor's service what should he care,
What better for him does the emperor fare ?
With the mighty power he wields at will,
Has ever he sheltered the land from ill ?
No ; a soldier-kingdom he seeks to raise,
And for this would set the world in a blaze,
Daring to risk and to compass all —

TRUMPETER.

Hush — who shall such words as these let fall ?

FIRST YAGER.

Whatever I think may be said by me,
For the general tells us the word is free.

SERGEANT.

True — that he said so I fully agree,
I was standing by. “The word is free —
The deed is dumb — obedience blind !”
His very words I can call to mind.

FIRST YAGER.

I know not if these were his words or no,
But he said the thing, and 'tis even so.

SECOND YAGER.

Victory ne'er will his flag forsake,
Though she's apt from others a turn to take :
Old Tilly outlived his fame's decline,
But under the banner of Wallenstein,
There am I certain that victory's mine !

Fortune is spell-bound to him, and must yield;
Whoe'er under Friedland shall take the field
Is sure of a supernatural shield:
For, as all the world is aware full well,
The duke has a devil in hire from hell.

SERGEANT.

In truth that he's charmed is past a doubt,
For we know how, at Lützen's bloody affair,
Where firing was thickest he still was there,
As coolly as might be, sirs, riding about.
The hat on his head was shot thro' and thro',
In coat and boots the bullets that flew
Left traces full clear to all men's view;
But none got so far as to scratch off his skin,
For the ointment of hell was too well rubbed in.

FIRST YAGER.

What wonders so strange can you all see there?
An elk-skin jacket he happens to wear,
And through it the bullets can make no way.

SERGEANT.

'Tis an ointment of witches' herbs, I say,
Kneaded and cooked by unholy spell.

TRUMPETER.

No doubt 'tis the work of the powers of hell.

SERGEANT.

That he reads in the stars we also hear,
Where the future he sees — distant or near —
But I know better the truth of the case:
A little gray man, at the dead of night,
Through bolted doors to him will pace —

The sentinels oft have hailed the sight,
And something great was sure to be nigh,
When this little graycoat had glided by.

FIRST YAGER.

Ay, ay, he's sold himself to the devil,
Wherefore, my lads, let's feast and revel.

SCENE VII.

The above. Recruit, Citizen, Dragoon.

*The Recruit advances from the tent, wearing a tin cap
on his head, and carrying a wine-flask.*

RECRUIT.

To father and uncle pray make my bow,
And bid 'em good-bye — I'm a soldier now.

FIRST YAGER.

See, yonder they're bringing us something new.

CITIZEN.

Oh, Franz, remember, this day you'll rue.

RECRUIT (*sings*).

The drum and the fife,
War's rattling throng,
And a wandering life
The world along!
Swift steed — and a hand
To curb and command —
With a blade by the side,
We're off far and wide.
As jolly and free,

As the finch in its glee,
On thicket or tree,
Under heaven's wide hollow —
Hurrah ! for the Friedlander's banner I'll follow !

SECOND YAGER.

Foregad ! a jolly companion, though.

[They salute him.]

CITIZEN.

He comes of a good kin ; now pray let him go.

FIRST YAGER.

And we weren't found in the streets you must know.

CITIZEN.

I tell you his wealth is a plentiful stock ;
Just feel the fine stuff that he wears for a frock.

TRUMPETER.

The emperor's coat is the best he can wear.

CITIZEN.

To a cap manufactory he is the heir.

SECOND YAGER.

The will of a man is his fortune alone.

CITIZEN.

His grandmother's shop will soon be his own.

FIRST YAGER.

Pish ! traffic in matches ! who would do't ?

CITIZEN.

A wine-shop his grandfather leaves, to boot,
A cellar with twenty casks of wine.

TRUMPETER.

These with his comrades he'll surely share.

SECOND YAGER.

Hark ye, lad — be a camp-brother of mine.

CITIZEN.

A bride he leaves sitting, in tears, apart.

FIRST YAGER.

Good — that now's a proof of an iron heart.

CITIZEN.

His grandmother's sure to die with sorrow.

SECOND YAGER.

The better — for then he'll inherit to-morrow.

SERGEANT (*advances gravely, and lays his hand on the
Recruit's tin cap*).

The matter no doubt you have duly weighed,
And here a new man of yourself have made;
With hanger and helm, sir, you now belong
To a nobler and more distinguished throng.
Thus, a loftier spirit 'twere well to uphold —

FIRST YAGER.

And, especially, never be sparing of gold.

SERGEANT.

In Fortune's ship, with an onward gale,
My friend, you have made up your mind to sail.
The earth-ball is open before you — yet there
Naught's to be gained, but by those who dare.
Stupid and sluggish your citizen's found,
Like a dyer's dull jade, in his ceaseless round,
While the soldier can be whatever he will,
For war o'er the earth is the watchword still.
Just look now at me, and the coat I wear,
You see that the emperor's baton I bear —
And all good government, over the earth,
You must know from the baton alone has birth;
For the sceptre that's swayed by the kingly hand
Is naught but a baton, we understand.
And he who has corporal's rank obtained,
Stands on the ladder where all's to be gained,
And you, like another, may mount to that height —

FIRST YAGER.

Provided you can but read and write.

SERGEANT.

Now, hark to an instance of this from me,
And one which I've lived myself to see:
There's Butler, the chief of dragoons, why he,
Whose rank was not higher a whit than mine,
Some thirty years since, at Cologne on Rhine,
Is a major-general now — because
He put himself forward and gained applause;
Filling the world with his martial fame,
While slept my merits without a name.
And even the Friedlander's self — I've heard —
Our general and all-commanding lord,
Who now can do what he will at a word,

Had at first but a private squire's degree ;
In the goddess of war yet trusting free,
He reared the greatness which now you see,
And, after the emperor, next is he.
Who knows what more he may mean or get ?
(*Slyly.*) For all-day's evening isn't come yet.

FIRST YAGER.

He was little at first, though now so great —
For at Altorf, in student's gown he played,
By your leave, the part of a roaring blade,
And rattled away at a queerish rate.
His fag he had well-nigh killed by a blow,
And their Nur'mberg worships swore he should go
To jail for his pains — if he liked it or no.
'Twas a new-built nest to be christened by him
Who first should be lodged. Well, what was his
whim ?
Why, he sent his dog forward to lead the way,
And they call the jail from the dog to this day.
That was the game a brave fellow should play,
And of all the great deeds of the general, none
E'er tickled my fancy, like this one.

[*During this speech the Second Yager has begun
toying with the girl who has been in waiting.*]

DRAGOON (*stepping between them*).

Comrade — give over this sport, I pray.

SECOND YAGER.

Why, who the devil shall say me nay !

DRAGOON.

I've only to tell you the girl's my own.

FIRST YAGER.

Such a morsel as this for himself alone! —
Dragoon, why say, art thou crazy grown?

SECOND YAGER.

In the camp to be keeping a wench for one!
No! the light of a pretty girl's face must fall,
Like the beams of the sun, to gladden us all.

[Kisses her.]

DRAGOON (*tears her away*).

I tell you again, that it sha'n't be done.

FIRST YAGER.

The pipers are coming, lads! now for fun!

SECOND YAGER (*to Dragoon*).

I sha'n't be far off, should you look for me.

SERGEANT.

Peace, my good fellows! — a kiss goes free.

SCENE VIII.

Enter Miners, and play a waltz — at first slowly, and afterward quicker. The First Yager dances with the girl, the Sutler-woman with the Recruit. The girl springs away, and the Yager, pursuing her, seizes hold of a Capuchin Friar just entering.

CAPUCHIN.

Hurrah! halloo! tol, lol, de rol, le!
The fun's at its height! I'll not be away!
Is't an army of Christians that join in such works?

Or are we all turned Anabaptists and Turks?
Is the Sabbath a day for this sport in the land,
As though the great God had the gout in his hand,
And thus couldn't smite in the midst of your band?
Say, is this a time for your revelling shouts,
For your banquetings, feasts, and holiday bouts?
Quid hic statis otiosi? declare

Why, folding your arms, stand ye lazily there?
While the furies of war on the Danube now fare,
And Bavaria's bulwark is lying full low,
And Ratisbon's fast in the clutch of the foe.
Yet, the army lies here in Bohemia still,
And caring for naught, so their paunches they fill
Bottles far rather than battles you'll get,
And your bills than your broadswords more readily
wet;

With the wenches, I ween, is your dearest concern,
And you'd rather roast oxen than Oxenstiern.
In sackcloth and ashes while Christendom's grieving,
No thought has the soldier his guzzle of leaving.

'Tis a time of misery, groans, and tears!
Portentous the face of the heavens appears!
And forth from the clouds behold blood-red,
The Lord's war mantle is downward spread —
While the comet is thrust as a threatening rod,
From the window of heaven by the hand of God.
The world is but one vast house of woe,
The ark of the church stems a bloody flow.
The Holy Empire — God help the same! —
Has wretchedly sunk to a hollow name.

The Rhine's gay stream has a gory gleam,
The cloister's nests are robbed by roysters;
The church-lands now are changed to lurch-lands;
Abbacies, and all other holy foundations
Now are but robber-sees — rogues' habitations.
And thus is each once-blest German state,
Deep sunk in the gloom of the desolate!

Whence comes all this? Oh, that will I tell —
 It comes of your doings, of sin, and of hell!
 Of the horrible, heathenish lives ye lead,
 Soldiers and officers, all of a breed.
 For sin is the magnet, on every hand,
 That draws your steel throughout the land!
 As the onion causes the tear to flow,
 So vice must ever be followed by woe —
 The W duly succeeds the V,
 This is the order of A, B, C.
Ubi erit victoriae spes,
Si offenditur Deus? which says,
 How, pray ye, shall victory e'er come to pass,
 If thus you play truant from sermon and mass,
 And do nothing but lazily loll o'er the glass?
 The woman, we're told in the Testament,
 Found the penny in search whereof she went.
 Saul met with his father's asses again,
 And Joseph his precious fraternal train,
 But he, who 'mong soldiers shall hope to see
 God's fear, or shame, or discipline — he
 From his toil, beyond doubt, will baffled return,
 Though a hundred lamps in the search he burn.
 To the wilderness preacher, th' Evangelist says,
 The soldiers, too, thronged to repent of their ways,
 And had themselves christened in former days.
Quid faciemus nos? they said:
 Toward Abraham's bosom what path must we tread?
Et ait illis, and, said he,
Neminem concutiatis;
 From bother and wrongs leave your neighbours free.
Neque calumniam faciatis;
 And deal nor in slander nor lies, d'ye see?
Contenti estote — content ye, pray,
Stipendiis vestris — with your pay —
 And curse for ever each evil way.
 There is a command — thou shalt not utter

The name of the Lord thy God in vain;
But where is it men most blasphemies mutter?
Why, here, in Duke Friedland's headquarters, 'tis
plain

If for every thunder and every blast,
Which blazing ye from your tongue-points cast,
The bells were but rung, in the country round,
Not a bellman, I ween, would there soon be found;
And if for each and every unholy prayer
Which to vent from your jabbering jaws you dare,
From your noddles were plucked but the smallest
hair,

Ev'ry crop would be smoothed ere the sun went
down,

Though at morn 'twere as bushy as Absalom's crown.

Now, Joshua, methinks, was a soldier as well —

By the arm of King David the Philistine fell;

But where do we find it written, I pray,

That they ever blasphemed in this villainous way?

One would think ye need stretch your jaws no more,

To cry "God help us!" than "Zounds!" to roar.

But, by the liquor that's poured in the cask, we know

With what it will bubble and overflow.

Again, it is written — thou shalt not steal,

And this you follow, i' faith! to the letter,

For open-faced robbery suits ye better.

The gripe of your vulture claws you fix

On all — and your wiles and rascally tricks

Make the gold unhid in our coffers now,

And the calf unsafe while yet in the cow —

Ye take both the egg and the hen, I vow.

Contenti estote — the preacher said;

Which means — be content with your army bread.

But how should the slaves not from duty swerve?

The mischief begins with the lord they serve,

Just like the members so is the head.

I should like to know who can tell me his creed.

FIRST YAGER.

Sir priest, 'gainst ourselves rail on as you will —
Of the general we warn you to breathe no ill.

CAPUCHIN.

Ne custodias gregem meam !
An Ahab is he, and a Jerobeam,
Who the people from faith's unerring way,
To the worship of idols would turn astray.

TRUMPETER *and* RECRUIT.

Let us not hear that again, we pray.

CAPUCHIN.

Such a Bramarbas, whose iron tooth
Would seize all the strongholds of earth forsooth !
Did he not boast, with ungodly tongue,
That Stralsund must needs to his grasp be wrung,
Though to heaven itself with a chain 'twere strung ?

TRUMPETER.

Will none put a stop to his slanderous bawl ?

CAPUCHIN.

A wizard he is ! — and a sorcerer Saul ! —
Holofernes ! — a Jehu ! — denying, we know,
Like St. Peter, his Master and Lord below ;
And hence must he quail when the cock doth crow —

BOTH YAGERS.

Now, parson, prepare ; for thy doom is nigh.

CAPUCHIN.

A fox more cunning than Herod, I trow —

TRUMPETER *and both YAGERS (pressing against him).*

Silence, again, — if thou wouldst not die!

CROATS (*interfering*).

Stick to it, father; we'll shield you, ne'er fear;
The close of your preachment now let's hear.

CAPUCHIN (*still louder*).

A Nebuchadnezzar in towering pride!
And a vile and heretic sinner beside!
He calls himself rightly the stone of a wall;
For, faith! he's a stumbling-stone to us all.
And ne'er can the emperor have peace indeed,
Till of Friedland himself the land is freed.

[*During the last passage, which he pronounces in an elevated voice, he has been gradually retreating, the Croats keeping the other soldiers off.*]

SCENE IX.

The above, without the Capuchin.

FIRST YAGER (*to the Sergeant*).

But, tell us, what meant he about chanticleer;
Whose crowing the general dares not hear?
No doubt it was uttered in spite and scorn.

SERGEANT.

Listen — 'tis not so untrue as it appears;
For Friedland was rather mysteriously born,
And is 'specially troubled with ticklish ears;
He can never suffer the mew of a cat;
And when the cock crows he starts thereat.

FIRST YAGER.

He's one and the same with the lion in that.

SERGEANT.

Mouse-still must all around him creep,
Strict watch in this the sentinels keep,
For he ponders on matters most grave and deep.

[*Voices in the tent. A tumult.*
Seize the rascal! lay on! lay on!

PEASANT'S VOICE.

Help! — mercy! — help!

OTHERS.

Peace! peace! begone!

FIRST YAGER.

Deuce take me, but yonder the swords are out!

SECOND YAGER.

Then I must be off, and see what 'tis about.

[*Yagers enter the tent.*

SUTLER - WOMAN (*comes forward*).

A scandalous villain! — a scurvy thief!

TRUMPETER.

Good hostess, the cause of this clamorous grief?

SUTLER - WOMAN.

A cut-purse! a scoundrel! the villain I call.
That the like in my tent should ever befall!
I'm disgraced and undone with the officers all.

SERGEANT.

Well, coz, what is it ?

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Why, what should it be ?

But a peasant they've taken just now with me —
A rogue with false dice, to favour his play.

TRUMPETER.

See ! they're bringing the boor and his son this way.

SCENE X.

Soldiers, dragging in the Peasant, bound.

FIRST YAGER.

He must hang !

SHARPSHOOTERS *and* DRAGOONS.

To the provost, come on !

SERGEANT.

'Tis the latest order that forth has gone.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

In an hour I hope to behold him swinging !

SERGEANT.

Bad work bad wages will needs be bringing.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER (*to the others*).

This comes of their desperation. We
First ruin them out and out, d'ye see ;
Which tempts them to steal, as it seems to me.

TRUMPETER.

How now! the rascal's cause would you plead?
The cur! the devil is in you indeed!

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

The boor is a man — as a body may say.

FIRST YAGER (*to the Trumpeter*).

Let 'em go! they're of Tiefenbach's corps, the railers,
A glorious train of glovers and tailors!
At Brieg, in garrison, long they lay;
What should they know about camps, I pray?

SCENE XI.

The above. Cuirassiers.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Peace! what's amiss with the boor, may I crave?

FIRST SHARPSHOOTER.

He has cheated at play, the cozening knave!

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

But say, has he cheated *you*, man, of aught?

FIRST SHARPSHOOTER.

Just cleaned me out — and not left me a groat.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

And can you, who've the rank of a Friedland man,
So shamefully cast yourself away,

As to try your luck with the boor at play ?
Let him run off, so that run he can.

[*The Peasant escapes, the others throng together.*]

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

He makes short work — is of resolute mood —
And that with such fellows as these is good.
Who is he ? not of Bohemia, that's clear.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

He's a Walloon — and respect, I trow,
Is due to the Pappenheim cuirassier !

FIRST DRAGOON (*joining*).

Young Piccolomini leads them now,
Whom they chose as colonel, of their own free might,
When Pappenheim fell in Lützen's fight.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

Durst they, indeed, presume so far ?

FIRST DRAGOON.

This regiment is something above the rest.
It has ever been foremost throughout the war,
And may manage its laws, as it pleases best ;
Besides, 'tis by Friedland himself caressed.

FIRST CUIRASSIER (*to the Second*).

Is't so in truth, man ? Who averred it ?

SECOND CUIRASSIER.

From the lips of the colonel himself I heard it.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

The devil ! we're not their dogs, I ween !

FIRST YAGER.

How now, what's wrong ? You're swollen with spleen !

SECOND YAGER.

Is it anything, comrades, may us concern ?

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

'Tis what none need be wondrous glad to learn.

[*The Soldiers press round him.*

To the Netherlands they would lend us now —

Cuirassiers, Yagers, and Shooters away,

Eight thousand in all must march, they say.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

What ! What ! again the old wandering way —

I got back from Flanders but yesterday !

SECOND CUIRASSIER (*to the Dragoons*).

You of Butler's corps must tramp with the rest.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

And we, the Walloons, must doubtless be gone.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Why, of all our squadrons these are the best.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

To march where that Milanese fellow leads on.

FIRST YAGER.

The infant ? that's queer enough in its way.

SECOND YAGER.

The priest — then, egad ! there's the devil to pay.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Shall we then leave the Friedlander's train,
Who so nobly his soldiers doth entertain —
And drag to the field with this fellow from Spain!
A niggard whom we in our souls disdain !
That'll never go down — I'm off, I swear.

TRUMPETER.

Why, what the devil should we do there ?
We sold our blood to the emperor — ne'er
For this Spanish red hat a drop we'll spare !

SECOND YAGER.

On the Friedlander's word and credit alone
We ranged ourselves in the trooper line,
And, but for our love to Wallenstein,
Ferdinand ne'er had our service known.

FIRST DRAGOON.

Was it not Friedland that formed our force ?
His fortune shall still be the star of our course.

SERGEANT.

Silence, good comrades, to me give ear —
Talking does little to help us here.
Much farther in this I can see than you all,
And a trap has been laid in which we're to fall.

FIRST YAGER.

List to the order-book ! hush — be still !

SERGEANT.

But first, Cousin Gustel, I pray thee fill
A glass of Melneck, as my stomach's but weak :
When I've tossed it off, my mind I'll speak.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Take it, good sergeant. I quake for fear —
Think you that mischief is hidden here ?

SERGEANT.

Look ye, my friends, 'tis fit and clear
That each should consider what's most near.
But as the general says, say I,
One should always the whole of a case descry.
We call ourselves all the Friedlander's troops ;
The burgher, on whom we're billeted, stoops
Our wants to supply, and cooks our soups.
His ox, or his horse, the peasant must chain
To our baggage-car, and may grumble in vain.
Just let a lance-corp'ral, with seven good men,
Tow'rd a village from far but come within ken,
You're sure he'll be prince of the place, and may
Cut what capers he will, with unquestioned sway.
Why, zounds ! lads, they heartily hate us all —
And would rather the devil should give them a call,
Than our yellow collars. And why don't they fall
On us fairly at once and get rid of our lumber ?
They're more than our match in point of number,
And carry the cudgel as we do the sword.
Why can we laugh them to scorn ? By my word,
Because we make up here a terrible horde.

FIRST YAGER.

Ay, ay, in the mass lies the spell of our might,
And the Friedlander judged the matter aright,
When, some eight or nine years ago, he brought
The emperor's army together. They thought
Twelve thousand enough for the general. In vain,
Said he, such a force I can never maintain.
Sixty thousand I'll bring ye into the plain,
And they, I'll be sworn, won't of hunger die.
And thus were we Wallenstein's men, say I.

SERGEANT.

For example, cut one of my fingers off,
This little one here from my right hand doff.
Is the taking my finger then all you've done?
No, no, to the devil my hand is gone!
'Tis a stump — no more — and use has none.
The eight thousand horse they wish to disband
May be but a finger of our army's hand.
But when they're once gone may we understand
We are but one-fifth the less? Oh, no —
By the Lord, the whole to the devil will go!
All terror, respect, and awe will be over,
And the peasant will swell his crest once more;
And the Board of Vienna will order us where
Our troops must be quartered and how we must fare,
As of old in the days of their beggarly care.
Yes, and how long it will be who can say
Ere the general himself they may take away?
For they don't much like him at court I learn.
And then it's all up with the whole concern!
For who, to our pay, will be left to aid us,
And see that they keep the promise they made us?
Who has the energy — who the mind —
The flashing thought — and the fearless hand —
Together to bring, and thus fastly bind,

The fragments that form our close-knit band ?
For example, dragoon — just answer us now,
From which of the countries of earth art thou ?

DRAGOON.

From distant Erin came I here.

SERGEANT (*to the two Cuirassiers*).

You're a Walloon, my friend, that's clear,
And you, an Italian, as all may hear.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Who I may be, faith ! I never could say ;
In my infant years they stole me away.

SERGEANT.

And you, from what far land may you be ?

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

I come from Buchau — on the Feder Sea.

SERGEANT.

Neighbour, and you ?

SECOND ARQUEBUSIER.

I am a Swiss.

SERGEANT (*to the Second Yager*).

And Yager, let's hear where your country is ?

SECOND YAGER.

Up above Wismar my fathers dwell.

SERGEANT (*pointing to the Trumpeter*).

And he's from Eger — and I as well :
And now, my comrades, I ask you whether,
Would any one think, when looking at us,
That we, from the North and South, had thus
Been hitherward drifted and blown together ?
Do we not seem as hewn from one mass ?
Stand we not close against the foe
As though we were glued or moulded so ?
Like mill-work don't we move, d'ye think !
'Mong ourselves in the nick, at a word or wink.
Who has thus cast us here all as one,
Now to be severed again by none ?
Who ? why, no other than Wallenstein !

FIRST YAGER.

In my life it ne'er was a thought of mine
Whether we suited each other or not,
I let myself go with the rest of the lot.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

I quite agree in the sergeant's opinion —
They'd fain have an end of our camp dominion,
And trample the soldier down, that they
May govern alone in their own good way.
'Tis a conspiracy — a plot, I say !

SUTLER - WOMAN.

A conspiracy — God help the day !
Then my customers won't have cash to pay.

SERGEANT.

Why, faith, we shall all be bankrupts made ;
The captains and generals, most of them, paid
The costs of the regiments with private cash,

And, wishing, 'bove all, to cut a dash,
Went a little beyond their means — but thought,
No doubt, that they thus had a bargain bought.
Now they'll be cheated, sirs, one and all,
Should our chief, our head, the general fall.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Oh, heaven! this curse I never can brook!
Why, half of the army stand in my book.
Two hundred dollars I've trusted madly
That Count Isolani who pays so badly.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Well, comrades, let's fix on what's to be done —
Of the ways to save us, I see but one;
If we hold together we need not fear;
So let us stand out as one man here;
And then they may order and send as they will,
Fast planted we'll stick in Bohemia still.
We'll never give in — no, nor march an inch,
We stand on our honour, and must not flinch.

SECOND YAGER.

We're not to be driven the country about,
Let 'em come here, and they'll find it out.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

Good sirs, 'twere well to bethink ye still,
That such is the emperor's sovereign will.

TRUMPETER.

Oh, as to the emperor, we needn't be nice.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

Let me not hear you say so twice.

TRUMPETER.

Why, 'tis even so — as I just have said.

FIRST YAGER.

True, man — I've always heard 'em say,
'Tis Friedland, alone, you've here to obey.

SERGEANT.

By our bargain with him it should be so,
Absolute power in his, you must know.
We've war, or peace, but as he may please,
Or gold or goods he has power to seize,
And hanging or pardon his will decrees.
Captains and colonels he makes — and he,
In short, by the imperial seal is free,
To hold all the marks of sovereignty.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

The duke is high and of mighty will,
But yet must remain, for good or for ill,
Like us all, but the emperor's servant still.

SERGEANT.

Not like us all — I there disagree —
Friedland is quite independent and free,
The Bavarian is no more a prince than he,
For, was I not by myself to see,
When on duty at Brandeis, how the emperor said,
He wished him to cover his princely head?

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

That was because of the Mecklenburg land,
Which he held in pawn from the emperor's hand.

FIRST YAGER (*to the Sergeant*).

In the emperor's presence, man! say you so?
That, beyond doubt, was a wonderful go!

SERGEANT (*feels in his pocket*).

If you question my word in what I have told,
I can give you something to grasp and hold.
[*Showing a coin.*
Whose image and stamp d'ye here behold?

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Oh! that is a Wallenstein's, sure!

SERGEANT - MAJOR.

Well, there, you have it — what doubt can rest,
Is he not prince, just as good as the best?
Coins he not money like Ferdinand?
Hath he not his own subjects and land?
Is he not called your highness, I pray?
And why should he not have his soldiers in pay?

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

That no one has ever meant to gainsay;
But we're still at the emperor's beck and call,
For his majesty 'tis who pays us all.

TRUMPETER.

In your teeth I deny it — and will again —
His majesty 'tis who pays us *not*,
For this forty weeks, say, what have we got
But a promise to pay, believed in vain?

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

What then! 'tis kept in safe hands, I suppose.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Peace, good sirs, will you come to blows ?
Have you a quarrel and squabble to know
If the emperor be our master or no ?
'Tis because of our rank, as his soldiers brave,
That we scorn the lot of the herded slave ;
And will not be driven from place to place,
As priest or puppies our path may trace.
And, tell me, is't not the sovereign's gain,
If the soldiers their dignity will maintain ?
Who but his soldiers give him the state
Of a mighty, wide-ruling potentate ?
Make and preserve for him, far and near,
The voice which Christendom quakes to hear ?
Well enough *they* may his yoke-chain bear,
Who feast on his favours, and daily share,
In golden chambers, his sumptuous fare.
We — we of his splendours have no part,
Naught but hard wearying toil and care,
And the pride that lives in a soldier's heart.

SECOND YAGER.

All great tyrants and kings have shown
Their wit, as I take it, in what they've done ;
They've trampled all others with stern command,
But the soldier they've led with a gentle hand.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

The soldier his worth must understand
Whoe'er doesn't nobly drive the trade,
'Twere best from the business far he'd stayed.
If I cheerily set my life on a throw,
Something still better than life I'll know ;
Or I'll stand to be slain for the paltry pelf,
As the Croat still does — and scorn myself

BOTH YAGERS.

Yes — honour is dearer than life itself.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

The sword is no plough, nor delving tool,
He, who would till with it, is but a fool.
For us, neither grass nor grain doth grow,
Houseless the soldier is doomed to go,
A changeful wanderer over the earth,
Ne'er knowing the warmth of a home-lit hearth.
The city glances — he halts — not there —
Nor in village meadows, so green and fair;
The vintage and harvest wreath are twined,
He sees, but must leave them far behind.
Then, tell me, what hath the soldier left,
If he's once of his self-esteem bereft?
Something he *must* have his own to call,
Or on slaughter and burnings at once he'll fall.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

God knows, 'tis a wretched life to live!

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Yet one, which I, for no other would give.
Look ye — far round in the world I've been,
And all of its different service seen.
The Venetian Republic — the Kings of Spain
And Naples I've served, and served in vain.
Fortune still frowned — and merchant and knight,
Craftsman and Jesuit, have met my sight;
Yet, of all their jackets, not one have I known
To please me like this steel coat of my own.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

Well — that now is what I can scarcely say.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

In the world, a man who would make his way,
Must plague and bestir himself night and day.
To honour and place if he choose the road,
He must bend his back to the golden load.
And if home delights should his fancy please,
With children and grandchildren round his knees,
Let him follow an honest trade in peace.
I've no taste for this kind of life — not I!
Free will I live, and as freely die.
No man's spoiler nor heir will I be —
But, throned on my nag, I will smile to see
The coil of the crowd that is under me.

FIRST YAGER.

Bravo! — that's as I've always done.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

In truth, sirs, it may be far better fun
To trample thus over your neighbour's crown.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Comrade, the times are bad of late —
The sword and the scales live separate.
But do not then blame that I've preferred,
Of the two, to lean, as I have, to the sword.
For mercy in war I will yield to none,
Though I never will stoop to be drummed upon.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER.

Who but the soldier the blame should bear
That the labouring poor so hardly fare?
The war with its plagues, which all have blasted,
Now sixteen years in the land hath lasted.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Why, brother, the blessed God above
Can't have from us all an equal love.
One prays for the sun, at which t'other will fret;
One is for dry weather — t'other for wet.
What you, now, regard as with misery rife,
Is to me the unclouded sun of life.
If 'tis at the cost of the burgher and boor,
I really am sorry that they must endure;
But how can I help it? Here, you must know,
'Tis just like a cavalry charge 'gainst the foe:
The steeds loud snorting, and on they go!
Whoever may lie in the mid-career —
Be it my brother or son so dear,
Should his dying groan my heart divide,
Yet over his body I needs must ride,
Nor pitying stop to drag him aside.

FIRST YAGER.

True — who ever asks how another may bide?

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Thus, my lads, 'tis my counsel, while
On the soldier Dame Fortune deigns to smile,
That we with both hands her bounty clasp,
For it may not be much longer left to our grasp.
Peace will be coming some over-night,
And then there's an end of our martial might.
The soldier unhorsed, and fresh mounted the boor,
Ere you can think it 'twill be as before.
As yet we're together firm bound in the land,
The hilt is yet fast in the soldier's hand.
But let 'em divide us, and soon we shall find
Short commons is all that remains behind.

FIRST YAGER.

No, no, by the Lord! *that* won't do for me.
Come, come, lads, let's all now, as one, agree.

SECOND YAGER.

Yes, let us resolve on what 'tis to be.

FIRST ARQUEBUSIER (*to the Sutler-woman, drawing out
his leather purse*).

Hostess, tell us how high you've scored.

SUTLER - WOMAN.

Oh, 'tis unworthy a single word. [They settle.

TRUMPETER.

You do well, sirs, to take a further walk,
Your company only disturbs our talk.
[*Exeunt Arquebusiers.*

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Plague take the fellows — they're brave, I know.

FIRST YAGER.

They haven't a soul 'bove a soapboiler's, though.

SECOND YAGER.

We're now alone, so teach us who can
How best we may meet and mar their plan.

TRUMPETER.

How? Why, let's tell them we will not go!

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Despising all discipline ! no, my lads, no,
Rather his corps let each of us seek,
And quietly then with his comrades speak,
That every soldier may clearly know,
It were not for his good so far to go.
For my Walloons to answer I'm free,
Every man of 'em thinks and acts with me.

SERGEANT.

The Terzky regiments, both horse and foot,
Will thus resolve, and will keep them to't.

SECOND CUIRASSIER (*joining the first*).

The Walloons and the Lombards one intent.

FIRST YAGER.

Freedom is Yagers' own element.

SECOND YAGER.

Freedom must ever with might entwine —
I live and will die by Wallenstein.

FIRST SHARPSHOOTER.

The Lorrainers go on with the strongest tide,
Where spirits are light and courage tried.

DRAGOON.

An Irishman follows his fortune's star.

SECOND SHARPSHOOTER.

The Tyrolese for their sovereign war.

FIRST CUIRASSIER.

Then, comrades, let each of our corps agree
A *pro memoria* to sign — that we,
In spite of all force or fraud, will be
To the fortunes of Friedland firmly bound,
For in him is the soldier's father found.
This we will humbly present, when done,
To Piccolomini — I mean the son —
Who understands these kind of affairs,
And the Friedlander's highest favour shares;
Besides, with the emperor's self, they say
He holds a capital card to play.

SECOND YAGER.

Well, then, in this, let us all agree,
That the colonel shall our spokesman be !

ALL (*going*).

Good ! the colonel shall our spokesman be.

SERGEANT.

Hold, sirs — just toss off a glass with me
To the health of Piccolomini.

SUTLER - WOMAN (*brings a flask*).

This shall not go to the list of scores,
I gladly give it — success be yours !

CUIRASSIER.

The soldier shall sway !

BOTH YAGERS.

The peasant shall pay !

DRAGOON *and* SHARPSHOOTERS.

The army shall flourishing stand !

TRUMPETER *and* SERGEANT.

And the Friedlander keep the command !

SECOND CUIRASSIER (*sings*).

Arouse ye, my comrades, to horse ! to horse !

To the field and to freedom we guide !

For there a man feels the pride of his force

And there is the heart of him tried.

No help to him there by another is shown,

He stands for himself and himself alone.

[The Soldiers from the background have come forward during the singing of this verse and form the chorus.]

Chorus.

No help to him by another is shown,

He stands for himself and himself alone.

DRAGOON.

Now freedom hath fled from the world, we find

But lords and their bondsmen vile :

And nothing holds sways in the breast of mankind

Save falsehood and cowardly guile.

Who looks in death's face with a fearless brow,

The soldier, alone, is the freeman now.

Chorus.

Who looks in death's face with a fearless brow,

The soldier, alone, is the freeman now.

FIRST YAGER.

With the troubles of life he ne'er bothers his pate,
And feels neither fear nor sorrow;
But boldly rides onward to meet with his fate —
He may meet it to-day, or to-morrow!
And, if to-morrow 'twill come, then, I say,
Drain we the cup of life's joy to-day!

Chorus.

And, if to-morrow 'twill come, then, I say,
Drain we the cup of life's joy to-day!
[*The glasses are here refilled, and all drink.*]

SERGEANT.

'Tis from heaven his jovial lot has birth;
Nor needs he to strive or toil.
The peasant may grope in the bowels of earth,
And for treasure may greedily moil:
He digs and he delves through life for the pelf,
And digs till he grubs out a grave for himself.

Chorus.

He digs and he delves through life for the pelf,
And digs till he grubs out a grave for himself.

FIRST YAGER.

The rider and lightning steed — a pair
Of terrible guests, I ween!
From the bridal-hall, as the torches glare,
Unbidden they join the scene;
Nor gold, nor wooing, his passion prove;
By storm he carries the prize of love!

Chorus.

Nor gold, nor wooing, his passion prove ;
By storm he carries the prize of love !

SECOND CUIRASSIER.

Why mourns the wench with so sorrowful face ?

Away, girl, the soldier must go !

No spot on the earth is his resting-place ;

And your *true* love he never can know.

Still onward driven by fate's rude wind,

He nowhere may leave his peace behind.

Chorus.

Still onward driven by fate's rude wind,

He nowhere may leave his peace behind.

FIRST YAGER.

*He takes the two next to him by the hand — the others
do the same — and form a large semicircle.*

Then rouse ye, my comrades — to horse ! to horse !

In battle the breast doth swell !

Youth boils — the life-cup foams in its force —

Up ! ere time can dew dispel !

And deep be the stake, as the prize is high —

Who life would win, he must dare to die !

Chorus.

And deep be the stake, as the prize is high !

Who life would win, he must dare to die !

[The curtain falls before the chorus has finished.]

THE END.

THE MAID OF ORLEANS
THE BRIDE OF MESSINA
WILHELM TELL
DEMETRIUS

The Maid of Orleans

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CHARLES THE SEVENTH, King of France.

QUEEN ISABEL, his Mother.

AGNES SOREL.

PHILIP THE GOOD, Duke of Burgundy.

EARL DUNOIS, Bastard of Orleans.

LA HIRE, DU CHATEL, French Officers.

ARCHBISHOP OF RHEIMS.

CHATILLON, a Burgundian Knight.

RAOUL, a Lotharingian Knight.

TALBOT, the English General.

LIONEL, FASTOLFE, English Officers.

MONTGOMERY, a Welshman.

COUNCILLORS OF ORLEANS.

AN ENGLISH HERALD.

THIBAUT D'ARC, a wealthy Countryman.

MARGOT, LOUISE, JOHANNA, his Daughters.

ETIENNE, CLAUDE MARIE, RAIMOND, their Suitors.

BERTRAND, another Countryman.

Apparition of a black Knight.

CHARCOAL-BURNER AND HIS WIFE.

Soldiers and People. Officers of the Crown. Bishops, Monks,
Marshals, Magistrates, Courtiers, and other mute persons
in the Coronation Procession.

The Maid of Orleans

PROLOGUE.

A rural District. To the right, a Chapel with an Image of the Virgin; to the left, an ancient oak.

SCENE I.

THIBAUT D'ARC. *His three Daughters. Three young Shepherds, their Suitors.*

THIB. Ay, my good neighbours! we at least to-day
Are Frenchmen still, free citizens and lords
Of the old soil, which our forefathers till'd.
Who knows whom we to-morrow must obey?
For England her triumphal banner waves
From every wall; the blooming fields of France
Are trampled down beneath her chargers' hoofs;
Paris hath yielded to her conquering arms,
And with the ancient crown of Dagobert
Adorns the scion of a foreign race.
Our king's descendant, disinherited,
Must steal in secret through his own domain;
While his first peer and nearest relative
Contentends against him in the hostile ranks;
Ay, his unnatural mother leads them on.
Around us towns and peaceful hamlets burn.

Near and more near the devastating fire
 Rolls toward these vales, which yet repose in peace.
 — Therefore, good neighbours, I have now resolved,
 While God still grants us safety, to provide
 For my three daughters; for 'midst war's alarms
 Women require protection, and true love
 Hath power to render lighter every load.

[*To the first Shepherd.*]

Come, Etienne! You seek my Margot's hand.
 Fields lying side by side and loving hearts
 Promise a happy union!

[*To the second.*]

Claude! You're silent,
 And my Louison looks upon the ground?
 How, shall I separate two loving hearts
 Because you have no wealth to offer me?
 Who now has wealth? Our barns and homes afford
 Spoil to the foe, and fuel to their fires.
 In times like these, a husband's faithful breast
 Affords the only shelter from the storm.

LOUIS. My father!

CLAUDE MARIE. My Louison!

LOUIS. (*embracing JOHANNA*) My dear sister!

THIB. I give to each a yard, a stall and herd,
 And also thirty acres; and as God
 Gave me his blessing, so I give you mine!

MARGOT. (*embracing JOHANNA*) Gladden our father
 — follow our example!

Let this day see three unions ratified!

THIB. Now go; make all things ready; for the
 morn

Shall see the wedding. Let our village friends
 Be all assembled for the festival.

[*The two couple retire arm-in-arm.*]

SCENE II.

THIBAUT, RAIMOND, JOHANNA.

THIB. Thy sisters, Joan, will soon be happy brides ;
I see them gladly, they rejoice my age ;
But thou, my youngest, giv'st me grief and pain.

RAIM. What is the matter ? Why upbraid thy
child ?

THIB. Here is this noble youth, the flower and
pride

Of all our village ; he hath fix'd on thee
His fond affections, and for three long years
Has woo'd thee with respectful tenderness ;
But thou dost thrust him back, with cold reserve,
Nor is there one 'mong all our shepherd youths
Who e'er can win a gracious smile from thee.
— I see thee blooming in thy youthful prime ;
Thy spring it is, the joyous time of hope ;
Thy person, like a tender flower, hath now
Disclos'd its beauty, but I vainly wait
For love's sweet blossom genially to blow,
And ripen joyously to golden fruit !
Oh, that must ever grieve me, and betrays
Some sad deficiency in nature's work !
The heart I like not, which, severe and cold,
Expands not in the genial years of youth.

RAIM. Forbear, good father ! Cease to urge her
thus !

A noble, tender fruit of heavenly growth
Is my Johanna's love, and time alone
Bringeth the costly to maturity !
Still she delights to range among the hills,
And fears descending from the wild, free heath,
To tarry 'neath the lowly roofs of men,

Where dwell the narrow cares of humble life.
From the deep vale, with silent wonder, oft
I mark her, when, upon a lofty hill,
Surrounded by her flock, erect she stands,
With noble port, and bends her earnest gaze
Down on the small domains of earth. To me
She looketh then, as if from other times
She came, foreboding things of import high.

THIB. 'Tis that precisely which displeases me!
She shuns her sisters' gay companionship;
Seeks out the desert mountains, leaves her couch
Before the crowing of the morning cock,
And in the dreaded hour, when men are wont
Confidingly to seek their fellow men,
She, like the solitary bird, creeps forth,
And in the fearful spirit-realm of night,
To yon crossway repairs, and there alone
Holds secret commune with the mountain wind.
Wherefore this place precisely doth she choose?
Why hither always doth she drive her flock?
For hours together I have seen her sit
In dreamy musing 'neath the Druid tree,
Which every happy creature shuns with awe.
For 'tis not holy there; an evil spirit
Hath since the fearful pagan days of old
Beneath its branches fix'd his dread abode.
The oldest of our villagers relate
Strange tales of horror of the Druid tree;
Mysterious voices of unearthly sound
From its unhallow'd shade oft meet the ear.
Myself, when in the gloomy twilight hour
My path once chanc'd to lead me near this tree,
Beheld a spectral figure sitting there,
Which slowly from its long and ample robe
Stretch'd forth its wither'd hand, and beckon'd me;
But on I went with speed, nor look'd behind,
And to the care of God consign'd my soul.

RAIM. (*pointing to the image of the Virgin*) Yon
holy image of the Virgin blest,
Whose presence heavenly peace diffuseth round,
Not Satan's work, leadeth thy daughter here.

THIB. No! not in vain hath it in fearful dreams
And apparitions strange reveal'd itself.
For three successive nights I have beheld
Johanna sitting on the throne at Rheims,
A sparkling diadem of seven stars
Upon her brow, the sceptre in her hand,
From which three lilies sprung, and I, her sire,
With her two sisters, and the noble peers,
The earls, archbishops, and the king himself,
Bow'd down before her. In my humble home,
How could this splendour enter my poor brain?
Oh, 'tis the prelude to some fearful fall!
This warning dream, in pictur'd show, reveals
The vain and sinful longing of her heart.
She looks with shame upon her lowly birth,
Because with richer beauty God hath grac'd
Her form, and dower'd her with wondrous gifts
Above the other maidens of this vale.
She in her heart indulges sinful pride,
And pride it is, through which the angels fell,
By which the fiend of hell seduces man.

RAIM. Who cherishes a purer, humbler mind
Than doth thy pious daughter? Does she not
With cheerful spirit work her sisters' will?
She is more highly gifted far than they,
Yet, like a servant maiden, it is she
Who silently performs the humblest tasks.
Beneath her guiding hands prosperity
Attendeth still thy harvests and thy flocks;
And around all she does there ceaseless flows
A blessing, rare and unaccountable.

THIB. Ay, truly! Unaccountable indeed!
Sad horror at this blessing seizes me!

— But now no more; henceforth I will be silent.
 Shall I accuse my own beloved child?
 I can do nought but warn and pray for her,
 Yet warn I must. — O shun the Druid tree!
 Stay not alone, and in the midnight hour
 Break not the ground for roots, no drinks prepare,
 No characters inscribe upon the sand!
 'Tis easy to unlock the realm of spirits;
 Listening each sound, beneath a film of earth
 They lie in wait, ready to rush aloft.
 Stay not alone, for in the wilderness
 The prince of darkness tempted e'en our Lord.

SCENE III.

THIBAUT, RAIMOND, JOHANNA.

BERTRAND *enters, a helmet in his hand.*

RAIM. Hush! here is Bertrand coming back from
 town,
 What bears he in his hand?

BERT. You look at me
 With wondering gaze; no doubt you are surprised
 To see this martial helm!

THIB. We are indeed!
 Come, tell us how you came by it? Why bring
 This fearful omen to our peaceful vale?

[JOHANNA, *who has remained indifferent during
 the two previous scenes, becomes attentive, and
 steps nearer.*

BERT. I scarce can tell you how I came by it.
 I had procur'd some tools at Vaucouleurs;
 A crowd was gather'd in the market-place,
 For fugitives were just arriv'd in haste
 From Orleans, bringing most disastrous news.

In tumult all the town together flock'd,
And as I forc'd a passage through the crowds,
A brown Bohemian woman, with this helm,
Approach'd me, eyed me narrowly, and said:
"Fellow, you seek a helm; I know it well.
Take this one! For a trifle it is yours."
"Go with it to the soldiers," I replied,
"I am a husbandman, and want no helm."
She would not cease, however, and went on:
"None knoweth if he may not want a helm.
A roof of metal for the head just now
Is of more value than a house of stone."
Thus she pursued me closely through the streets,
Still offering the helm, which I refused.
I mark'd it well, and saw that it was bright,
And fair and worthy of a knightly head;
And when in doubt I weigh'd it in my hand,
The strangeness of the incident revolving,
The woman disappear'd, for suddenly
The rushing crowd had carried her away,
And I was left, the helmet in my hand.

JOHAN. (*attempting eagerly to seize it*) Give me the helmet!

BERT. Why, what boots it you?
It is not suited to a maiden's head.

JOHAN. (*seizing it from him*) Mine is the helmet —
it belongs to me!

THIB. What whim is this?

RAIM. Nay, let her have her way!
This warlike ornament becomes her well,
For in her bosom beats a manly heart.
Remember how she once subdued the wolf,
The savage monster which destroyed our herds,
And fill'd the neighb'ring shepherds with dismay.
She all alone — the lion-hearted maid —
Fought with the wolf, and from him snatch'd the lamb,
Which he was bearing in his bloody jaws.

How brave soe'er the head this helm adorn'd,
It cannot grace a worthier one than hers!

THIB. (to BERTRAND) Relate what new disasters
have occurred.

What tidings brought the fugitives?

BERT. May God
Have pity on our land, and save the king!
In two great battles we have lost the day;
Our foes are station'd in the heart of France,
Far as the river Loire our lands are theirs —
Now their whole force they have combined, and lay
Close siege to Orleans.

THIB. God protect the king!

BERT. Artillery is brought from every side,
And as the dusky squadrons of the bees
Swarm round the hive upon a summer day,
As clouds of locusts from the sultry air
Descend and shroud the country round for miles,
So doth the cloud of war, o'er Orleans' fields,
Pour forth its many-nationed multitudes,
Whose varied speech, in wild confusion blent,
With strange and hollow murmurs fills the air.
For Burgundy, the mighty potentate,
Conducts his motley host; the Hennegarians,
The men of Liege and of Luxemburg,
The people of Namur, and those who dwell
In fair Brabant; the wealthy men of Ghent,
Who boast their velvets, and their costly silks;
The Zealanders, whose cleanly towns appear
Emerging from the ocean; Hollanders
Who milk the lowing herds; men from Utrecht,
And even from West Friesland's distant realm,
Who look toward the ice-pole — all combine,
Beneath the banner of the powerful duke,
Together to accomplish Orleans' fall.

THIB. Oh the unblest, the lamentable strife,
Which turns the arms of France against itself!

BERT. E'en she, the mother-queen, proud Isabel —
Bavaria's haughty princess — may be seen,
Array'd in armour, riding through the camp;
With poisonous words of irony she fires
The hostile troops to fury 'gainst her son,
Whom she hath clasp'd to her maternal breast.

THIB. A curse upon her, and may God prepare
For her a death like haughty Jezebel's!

BERT. The fearful Sal'sbury conducts the siege,
The town-destroyer; with him Lionel,
The brother of the lion; Talbot, too,
Who, with his murd'rous weapon, moweth down
The people in the battle: they have sworn
With ruthless insolence to doom to shame
The hapless maidens, and to sacrifice
All who the sword have wielded, with the sword.
Four lofty watch-towers, to o'ertop the town,
They have uprear'd; Earl Sal'sbury from on high
Casteth abroad his cruel, murd'rous glance,
And marks the rapid wanderers in the streets.
Thousands of cannon-balls, of pond'rous weight,
Are hurl'd into the city. Churches lie
In ruin'd heaps, and Notre Dame's royal tower
Begins at length to bow its lofty head.
They also have form'd powder-vaults below,
And thus, above a subterranean hell,
The timid city every hour expects,
'Midst crashing thunder, to break forth in flames.

[JOHANNA *listens with close attention, and places
the helmet on her head.*

THIB. But where were then our heroes? Where
the swords
Of Saintrailles, and La Hire, and brave Dunois,
Of France the bulwark, that the haughty foe
With such impetuous force thus onward rushed?
Where is the king? Can he supinely see
His kingdom's peril, and his cities' fall?

BERT. The king at Chinon holds his court; he lacks

Soldiers to keep the field. Of what avail
The leader's courage, and the hero's arm,
When pallid fear doth paralyse the host?
A sudden panic, as if sent from God,
Unnerves the courage of the bravest men.
In vain the summons of the king resounds.
As, when the howling of the wolf is heard,
The sheep in terror gather side by side,
So Frenchmen, careless of their ancient fame,
Seek only now the shelter of the towns.
One knight alone, I have been told, has brought
A feeble company, and joins the king
With sixteen banners.

JOHAN. (*quickly*) What's the hero's name?

BERT. 'Tis Baudricour. But much I fear the knight
Will not be able to elude the foe,
Who tracks him closely with two numerous hosts.

JOHAN. Where halts the knight? Pray tell me, if
you know.

BERT. About a one day's march from Vaucouleurs.

THIB. (*to JOHANNA*) Why, what is that to thee?
Thou dost inquire

Concerning matters which become thee not.

BERT. The foe being now so strong, and from the
king

No safety to be hoped, at Vaucouleurs
They have with unanimity resolved
To yield them to the Duke of Burgundy.
Thus we avoid a foreign yoke, and still
Continue by our ancient royal line;
Ay, to the ancient crown we may fall back
Should France and Burgundy be reconcil'd.

JOHAN. (*as if inspired*) Speak not of treaty! Speak
not of surrender!

The Saviour comes, he arms him for the fight.

The fortunes of the foe before the walls
 Of Orleans shall be wreck'd! His hour is come,
 He now is ready for the reaper's hand,
 And with her sickle will the maid appear,
 And mow to earth the harvest of his pride.
 She from the heavens will tear his glory down,
 Which he had hung aloft, among the stars;
 Despair not! Fly not! for ere yonder corn
 Assumes its golden hue, or ere the moon
 Displays her perfect orb, no English horse
 Shall drink the rolling waters of the Loire.

BERT. Alas! no miracle will happen now!

JOHAN. Yes, there shall yet be one — a snow-white
 dove

Shall fly, and with the eagle's boldness, tear
 The birds of prey, which rend her Fatherland.
 She shall o'erthrow this haughty Burgundy,
 Betrayer of the kingdom; Talbot, too,
 The hundred-handed, heaven-defying scourge;
 This Sal'sbury, who violates our fanes,
 And all these island robbers shall she drive
 Before her like a flock of timid lambs.
 The Lord will be with her, the God of battle;
 A weak and trembling creature he will choose,
 And through a tender maid proclaim his power,
 For he is the Almighty!

THIB. What strange power
 Hath seized the maiden?

RAIM. Doubtless 'tis the helm
 Which doth inspire her with such martial thoughts.
 Look at your daughter. Mark her flashing eye,
 Her glowing cheek, which kindles as with fire!

JOHAN. This realm shall fall! This ancient land
 of fame,
 The fairest that, in his majestic course,
 Th' eternal sun surveys — this paradise,
 Which, as the apple of his eye, God loves —

Endure the fetters of a foreign yoke ?
 — Here were the heathen scatter'd, and the cross
 And holy image were planted here ;
 Here rest Saint Louis' ashes, and from hence
 The troops went forth, who set Jerusalem free.

BERT. (*in astonishment*) Hark how she speaks !

Why, whence can she obtain
 This glorious revelation ? — Father Arc !
 A wond'rous daughter God hath given you !

JOHAN. We shall no longer serve a native prince !
 The king, who never dies, shall pass away —
 The guardian of the sacred plough, who fills
 The earth with plenty, who protects our herds,
 Who frees the bondmen from captivity,
 Who gathers all his cities round his throne —
 Who aids the helpless, and appals the base,
 Who envies no one, for he reigns supreme ;
 Who is a mortal, yet an angel too,
 Dispensing mercy on the hostile earth.
 For the king's throne, which glitters o'er with gold,
 Affords a shelter for the destitute ; —
 Power and compassion meet together there,
 The guilty tremble, but the just draw near,
 And with the guardian lion fearless sport !
 The stranger king, who cometh from afar,
 Whose fathers' sacred ashes do not lie
 Interr'd among us ; can he love our land ?
 Who was not young among our youth, whose heart
 Respondeth not to our familiar words,
 Can he be as a father to our sons ?

THIB. God save the king and France ! We're
 peaceful folk
 Who neither wield the sword, nor rein the steed.
 — Let us await the king whom victory crowns ;
 The fate of battle is the voice of God.
 He is our lord who crowns himself at Rheims,
 And on his head receives the holy oil.

— Come, now to work ! come ! and let every one
Think only of the duty of the hour !
Let the earth's great ones for the earth contend,
Untroubled we may view the desolation,
For steadfast stand the acres which we till.
The flames consume our villages, our corn
Is trampled 'neath the tread of warlike steeds ;
With the new spring new harvests reappear,
And our light huts are quickly rear'd again !
[They all retire, except the Maiden.]

SCENE IV.

JOHAN. (*alone*) Farewell, ye mountains, ye beloved
glades,
Ye lone and peaceful valleys, fare ye well !
Through you Johanna néver more may stray !
For aye Johanna bids you now farewell.
Ye meads which I have water'd and ye trees
Which I have planted, still in beauty bloom !
Farewell ye grottos, and ye crystal springs !
Sweet echo, vocal spirit of the vale,
Who sang'st responsive to my simple strain,
Johanna goes, and ne'er returns again.

Ye scenes where all my tranquil joys I knew,
For ever now I leave you far behind !
Poor foldless lambs, no shepherd now have you !
O'er the wide heath stray henceforth unconfin'd !
For I to danger's field, of crimson hue,
Am summon'd hence, another flock to find.
Such is to me the Spirit's high behest ;
No earthly vain ambition fires my breast.

For who in glory did on Horeb's height
Descend to Moses in the bush of flame,

And bade him go and stand in Pharaoh's sight —
Who once to Israel's pious shepherd came,
And sent him forth, his champion in the fight, —
Who aye hath loved the lowly shepherd train, —
He, from these leafy boughs, thus spake to me,
"Go forth! Thou shalt on earth my witness be.

"Thou in rude armour must thy limbs invest,
A plate of steel upon thy bosom wear;
Vain earthly love may never stir thy breast,
Nor passion's sinful glow be kindled there.
Ne'er with the bride-wreath shall thy locks be dress'd,
Nor on thy bosom bloom an infant fair;
But war's triumphant glory shall be thine;
Thy martial fame all women's shall outshine.

"For when in fight the stoutest hearts despair,
When direful ruin threatens France, forlorn,
Then thou aloft my oriflamme shalt bear,
And swiftly as the reaper mows the corn,
Thou shalt lay low the haughty conqueror;
His fortune's wheel thou rapidly shalt turn,
To Gaul's heroic sons deliv'rance bring.
Relieve beleaguer'd Rheims, and crown thy king!"

The heavenly Spirit promised me a sign;
He sends the helmet, it hath come from him.
Its iron fillet me with strength divine,
I feel the courage of the cherubim;
As with the rushing of a mighty wind
It drives me forth to join the battle's din;
The clanging trumpets sound, the chargers rear,
And the loud war-cry thunders in mine ear.

[She goes out.]

ACT I.

SCENE I.

The Royal Residence at Chinon.

DUNOIS *and* DU CHATEL.

DUNOIS. No longer I'll endure it. I renounce
This recreant monarch who forsakes himself.
My valiant heart doth bleed, and I could rain
Hot tear-drops from mine eyes, that robber-swords
Partition thus the royal realm of France;
That cities, ancient as the monarchy,
Deliver to the foe the rusty keys,
While here in idle and inglorious ease
We lose the precious season of redemption.
— Tidings of Orleans' peril reach mine ear,
Hither I sped from distant Normandy,
Thinking, arrayed in panoply of war,
To find the monarch with his marshall'd hosts;
And find him — here! begirt with troubadours,
And juggling knaves, engaged in solving riddles,
And planning festivals in Sorel's honour,
As brooded o'er the land profoundest peace!
— The constable hath gone, he will not brook
Longer the spectacle of shame. — I too
Depart, and leave him to his evil fate.

DU CHAT. Here comes the king.

SCENE II.

KING CHARLES. *The same.*

CHAS. The constable hath sent us back his sword
And doth renounce our service. Now, by Heaven!
He thus hath rid us of a churlish man,
Who insolently sought to lord it o'er us.

DUNOIS. A man is precious in such perilous times;
I would not deal thus lightly with his loss.

CHAS. Thou speakest thus from love of opposition;
While he was here, thou never wert his friend.

DUNOIS. He was a tiresome, proud, vexatious fool,
Who never could resolve. — For once, however,
He hath resolved. Betimes he goeth hence,
Where honour can no longer be achieved.

CHAS. Thou'rt in a pleasant humour; undisturb'd
I'll leave thee to enjoy it. — Hark, Du Chatel!
Ambassadors are here from old king René,
Of tuneful song the master, far renowned.
— Let them as honour'd guests be entertain'd,
And unto each present a chain of gold.

[*To the Bastard.*]

Why smilest thou, Dunois?

DUNOIS. That from thy mouth
Thou shakest golden chains.

DU CHAT. Alas! my king!
No gold existeth in thy treasury.

CHAS. Then gold must be procured. — It must not
be

That bards unhonour'd from our court depart.
'Tis they who make our barren sceptre bloom,
'Tis they who wreath around our fruitless crown
Life's joyous branch, of never-fading green.
Reigning, they justly rank themselves as kings,
Of gentle wishes they erect their throne,

Their harmless realm existeth not in space;
Hence should the bard accompany the king,
Life's higher sphere the heritage of both!

DU CHAT. My royal liege! I sought to spare thine
ear

So long as aid and counsel could be found;
Now dire necessity doth loose my tongue.
— Nought hast thou now in presents to bestow,
Thou hast not wherewithal to live to-morrow!
The spring-tide of thy fortune is run out,
And lowest ebb is in thy treasury!
The soldiers, disappointed of their pay,
With sullen murmurs, threaten to retire.
My counsel faileth, not with royal splendour
But meagerly, to furnish out thy household.

CHAS. My royal customs pledge, and borrow gold
From the Lombardians.

DU CHAT. Sire, thy revenues,
Thy royal customs, are for three years pledg'd.

DUNOIS. And pledge meanwhile and kingdom both
are lost.

CHAS. Still many rich and beauteous lands are ours.

DUNOIS. So long as God and Talbot's sword
permit!

When Orleans falleth into English hands
Then with King René thou may'st tend thy sheep!

CHAS. Still at this king thou lov'st to point thy
jest;

Yet 'tis this lackland monarch, who to-day
Hath with a princely crown invested me.

DUNOIS. Not, in the name of Heaven, with that of
Naples,

Which is for sale, I hear, since he kept sheep.

CHAS. It is a sportive festival, a jest,
Wherein he giveth to his fancy play,
To found a world all innocent and pure
In this barbaric, rude reality.

Yet noble — ay, right royal is his aim !
He will again restore the golden age,
When gentle manners reigned, when faithful love
The heroic hearts of valiant knights inspired,
And noble women, whose accomplished taste
Diffuseth grace around, in judgment sat.
The old man dwelleth in those bygone times,
And in our work-day world would realise
The dreams of ancient bards, who picture life
'Mid bowers celestial, thron'd on golden clouds.
He hath established hence a court of love,
Where valiant knights may dwell, and homage yield
To noble women, who are there enthroned,
And where pure love and true may find a home.
Me he hath chosen as the Prince of Love.

DUNOIS. I am not such a base degenerate churl
As Love's dominion rudely to assail.
I am her son, from her derive my name,
And in her kingdom lies my heritage.
The prince of Orleans was my sire, and while
No woman's heart was proof against his love,
No hostile fortress could withstand his shock !
Wilt thou, indeed, with honour name thyself
The Prince of Love — be bravest of the brave !
As I have read in these old chronicles,
Love aye went coupled with heroic deeds,
And valiant heroes, not inglorious shepherds,
So legends tell us, graced King Arthur's board.
The man whose valour is not beauty's shield,
Is all unworthy of her golden prize.
Here the arena ! — combat for the crown,
Thy royal heritage ! — with knightly sword
Thy lady's honour and thy realm defend —
And hast thou with hot valour snatch'd the crown
From streams of hostile blood, — then is the time,
And it would well become thee as a prince,
Love's myrtle chaplet round thy brows to wreath.

CHAS. (*to a PAGE, who enters*) What is the matter?

PAGE. Senators from Orleans

Entreat an audience, Sire.

CHAS. Conduct them hither!

[PAGE *retires*.

Doubtless they succour need; what can I do,

Myself all-succourless!

SCENE III.

The same. Three SENATORS.

CHAS. Welcome, my trusty citizens of Orleans!

What tidings bring ye from my faithful town?

Doth she continue with her wonted zeal

Still bravely to withstand the leaguering foe?

SENAT. Ah, Sire! the city's peril is extreme;

And giant ruin, waxing hour by hour,

Still onward strides. The bulwarks are destroyed —

The foe, at each assault, advantage gains;

Bare of defenders are the city walls,

For with rash valour forth our soldiers rush,

While few, alas! return to view their homes,

And famine's scourge impendeth o'er the town.

In this extremity, the noble Count

Of Rochepierre, commander of the town,

Hath made a compact with the enemy,

According to old custom, to yield up,

On the twelfth day, the city to the foe,

Unless, meanwhile, before the town appear

A host of magnitude to raise the siege.

[DUNOIS *manifests the strongest indignation*.

CHAS. The interval is brief.

SENAT. We hither come,

Attended by a hostile retinue,

To implore thee, Sire, to pity thy poor town,

And to send succour ere the appointed day,
When, if still unrelieved, she must surrender.

DUNOIS. And could Saintrailles consent to give his
voice

To such a shameful compact?

SENAT. Never, sir.

Long as the hero liv'd, none dared to breathe

A single word of treaty, or surrender.

DUNOIS. He then is dead?

SENAT. The noble hero fell,

His monarch's cause defending, on our walls.

CHAS. What! Saintrailles dead! Oh, in that single
man

A host is founder'd!

[A Knight enters and speaks apart with DUNOIS,
who starts with surprise.

DUNOIS. That too!

CHAS. Well! What is it?

DUNOIS. Count Douglas sendeth here. The Scot-
tish troops

Revolt, and threaten to retire at once,

Unless their full arrears are paid to-day.

CHAS. Du Chatel!

DU CHAT. (*shrugs his shoulders*) Sire! I know
not what to counsel.

CHAS. Pledge, promise all, even unto half my
realm. —

DU CHAT. 'Tis vain! They have been fed with hope
too often!

CHAS. They are the finest troops of all my host!
They must not now, not now abandon me.

SENAT. (*throwing himself at the KING's feet*) Oh,
king, assist us! Think of our distress!

CHAS. (*in despair*) How! Can I summon armies
from the earth?

Or grow a cornfield on my open palm?

Rend me in pieces! — Pluck my bleeding heart

Forth from my breast, and coin it 'stead of gold!
I've blood for you, but neither coin, nor troops.

[He sees SOREL approach, and hastens toward her with outstretched arms.]

SCENE IV.

The same. AGNES SOREL, a casket in her hand.

CHAS. My Agnes! Oh, my love! my dearest life!
Thou comest here to snatch me from despair!
Refuge I take within thy loving arms;
Possessing thee, I feel that nought is lost.

SOREL. My king, beloved!

[Looking around with an anxious, inquiring gaze.]

Dunois! Say, is it true,

Du Chatel?

DU CHAT. 'Tis alas!

SOREL. So great the need?

No treasure left? The soldiers will disband?

DU CHAT. Alas! it is too true!

SOREL. *(giving him the casket)* Here — here is gold,
Here too are jewels! Melt my silver down!
Sell, pledge my castles — on my fair domains
In Provence, treasure raise — turn all to gold,
Appease the troops! No time is to be lost!

[She urges him to depart.]

CHAS. Well now, Dunois! Du Chatel! Do ye still
Account me poor, when I possess the crown
Of womankind? — She's nobly born as I;
The royal blood of Valois not more pure;
The most exalted throne she would adorn —
Yet she rejects it with disdain, and claims
No other title than to be my love.
No gift more costly will she e'er receive
Than early flower in winter, or rare fruit!

No sacrifice, on my part, she permits,
 Yet sacrificeth all she hath to me!
 With generous spirit she doth venture all
 Her wealth and fortune in my sinking bark.

DUNOIS. Ay, she is mad indeed, my king, as thou;
 She throws her all into a burning house,
 And draweth water in the leaky vessel
 Of the Danaïdes. Thee she will not save,
 And in thy ruin but involve herself. —

SOREL. Believe him not! Full many a time he
 hath

Perill'd his life for thee, and now, forsooth,
 Chafeth, because I risk my worthless gold!
 How? Have I freely sacrificed to thee
 What is esteemed far more than gold and pearls,
 And shall I now hold back the gifts of fortune?
 Oh, come! Let my example challenge thee
 To noble self-denial! Let's at once
 Cast off the needless ornaments of life!
 Thy courtiers metamorphose into soldiers;
 Thy gold transmute to iron; all thou hast,
 With resolute daring, venture for thy crown!
 Peril and want we will participate!
 Let us bestride the war-horse, and expose
 Our tender person to the fiery glow
 Of the hot sun, take for our canopy
 The clouds above, and make the stones our pillow.
 The rudest warrior, when he sees his king
 Bear hardship and privation like the meanest,
 Will patiently endure his own hard lot!

CHAS. (*laughing*) Ay! now is realised an ancient
 word

Of prophecy, once uttered by a nun
 Of Clairmont, in prophetic mood, who said,
 That through a woman's aid I o'er my foes
 Should triumph, and achieve my father's crown.
 Far off I sought her in the English camp;

I strove to reconcile a mother's heart;
Here stands the heroine — my guide to Rheims!
My Agnes! I shall triumph through thy love!

SOREL. Thou'lt triumph through the valiant swords
of friends.

CHAS. And from my foes' dissensions much I
hope —

For sure intelligence hath reach'd mine ear,
That 'twixt these English lords and Burgundy
Things do not stand precisely as they did; —
Hence to the duke I have despatch'd La Hire,
To try if he can lead my angry vassal
Back to his ancient loyalty and faith: —
Each moment now I look for his return.

DU CHAT. (*at the window*) A knight e'en now dis-
mounteth in the court.

CHAS. A welcome messenger! We soon shall
learn

Whether we're doomed to conquer or to yield.

SCENE V.

The same. LA HIRE.

CHAS. (*meeting him*) Hope bringest thou, or not?
Be brief, La Hire!

Out with thy tidings! What must we expect?

HIRE. Expect nought, Sire, save from thine own
good sword.

CHAS. The haughty duke will not be reconciled!
Speak! How did he receive my embassy?

HIRE. His first and unconditional demand,
Ere he consent to listen to thine errand,
Is that Du Chatel be deliver'd up,
Whom he doth name the murderer of his sire.

CHAS. This base condition we reject with scorn!

HIRE. Then be the league dissolved ere it commence!

CHAS. Hast thou thereon, as I commanded thee,
Challenged the duke to meet me in fair fight
On Montereau's bridge, whereon his father fell?

HIRE. Before him on the ground I flung thy glove,
And said: — "Thou wouldst forget thy majesty,
And like a knight do battle for thy realm."

He scornfully rejoined — "He needed not
To fight for that which he possess'd already.

But if thou wert so eager for the fray,
Before the walls of Orleans thou wouldst find him,
Whither he purposed going on the morrow;"
Thereon he laughing turn'd his back upon me.

CHAS. Say, did not justice raise her sacred voice,
Within the precincts of my parliament?

HIRE. The rage of party, Sire, hath silenc'd her.
An edict of the parliament declares
Thee, and thy race, excluded from the throne.

DUNOIS. These upstart burghers' haughty insolence!

CHAS. Hast thou attempted with my mother aught?

HIRE. With her?

CHAS. Ay! How did she demean herself?

HIRE. (*after a few moments' reflection*) I chanced to
step within St. Denis' walls

Precisely at the royal coronation.

The crowds were dress'd as for a festival;

Triumphal arches rose in every street

Through which the English monarch was to pass.

The way was strewed with flowers, and with huzzas,

As France some brilliant conquest had achieved,

The people thronged around the royal car.

SOREL. They could huzza — huzza, while trampling
thus

Upon a gracious sovereign's loving heart!

HIRE. I saw young Harry Lancaster — the boy —
On good St. Lewis' regal chair enthroned;

On either side his haughty uncles stood,
Bedford and Gloucester, and before him kneeled,
To render homage for his lands, Duke Philip.

CHAS. O peer dishonour'd ! O unworthy cousin !

HIRE. The child was timid, and his footing lost
As up the steps he mounted toward the throne.
An evil omen ! murmured forth the crowd,
And scornful laughter burst on every side.
Then forward stepped Queen Isabel — thy mother,
And — but it angers me to utter it !

CHAS. Say on.

HIRE. Within her arms she clasped the boy,
And herself placed him on thy father's throne.

CHAS. Oh, mother ! mother !

HIRE. E'en the murderous bands
Of the Burgundians, at this spectacle,
Evinced some tokens of indignant shame.
The queen perceived it, and addressed the crowds,
Exclaiming with loud voice : " Be grateful, Frenchmen,
That I engraft upon a sickly stock
A healthy scion, and redeem you from
The misbegotten son of a mad sire ! "

[*The KING hides his face ; Agnes hastens toward him and clasps him in her arms ; all the bystanders express aversion and horror.*]

DUNOIS. She-wolf of France ! Rage-breathing Megara !

CHAS. (*after a pause, to the SENATORS*) Yourselves
have heard the posture of affairs.

Delay no longer, back return to Orleans,
And bear this message to my faithful town :
I do absolve my subjects from their oath,
Their own best interests let them now consult,
And yield them to the Duke of Burgundy ;
'Yclept the Good, he needs must prove humane.

DUNOIS. What say'st thou, Sire ? Thou wilt abandon Orleans !

SENAT. (*kneels down*) My king! Abandon not thy faithful town!

Consign her not to England's harsh control;
She is a precious jewel in thy crown,
And none hath more inviolate faith maintain'd
Toward the kings, thy royal ancestors.

DUNOIS. Have we been routed? Is it lawful,
Sire,

To leave the English masters of the field,
Without a single stroke to save the town?
And thinkest thou, with careless breath, forsooth,
Ere blood hath flowed, rashly to give away
The fairest city from the heart of France?

CHAS. Blood hath been poured forth freely, and in
vain!

The hand of Heaven is visibly against me;
In every battle is my host o'erthrown,
I am rejected of my parliament,
My capital, my people, hail my foe,
Those of my blood, — my nearest relatives, —
Forsake me and betray — and my own mother
Doth nurture at her breast the hostile brood.
— Beyond the Loire we will retire, and yield
To the o'ermastering hand of destiny
Which sideth with the English.

SOREL. God forbid

That we in weak despair should quit this realm!
This utterance came not from thy heart, my king,
Thy noble heart, which hath been sorely riven
By the fell deed of thy unnatural mother!
Thou'lt be thyself again, right valiantly
Thou'lt battle with thine adverse destiny,
Which doth oppose thee with relentless ire.

CHAS. (*lost in gloomy thought*) Is it not true? A
dark and ominous doom

Impendeth o'er the Heaven-abandon'd house
Of Valois — there preside the avenging powers,

To whom a mother's crimes unbarr'd the way.
For thirty years my sire in madness rav'd ;
Already have three elder brothers been
Mow'd down by death ; 'tis the decree of Heaven,
The house of the Sixth Charles is doom'd to fall.

SOREL. In thee 'twill rise with renovated life !
Oh, in thyself have faith ! — Believe me, king,
Not vainly hath a gracious destiny
Redeem'd thee from the ruin of thy house,
And by thy brethren's death exalted thee,
The youngest born, to an unlook'd-for throne.
Heaven in thy gentle spirit hath prepared ·
The leech to remedy the thousand ills
By party rage inflicted on the land.
The flames of civil discord thou wilt quench,
And my heart tells me, thou'lt establish peace,
And found anew the monarchy of France.

CHAS. Not I ! The rude and storm-vexed times
require
A pilot formed by nature to command.
A peaceful nation I could render happy,
A wild rebellious people not subdue.
I never with the sword could open hearts
Against me closed in hatred's cold reserve.

SOREL. The people's eye is dimm'd, an error blinds
them
But this delusion will not long endure ;
The day is not far distant, when the love,
Deep rooted in the bosom of the French,
Toward their native monarch will revive,
Together with the ancient jealousy,
Which forms a barrier 'twixt the hostile nations.
The haughty foe precipitates his doom.
Hence, with rash haste abandon not the field,
With dauntless front contest each foot of ground,
As thine own heart defend the town of Orleans !
Let every boat be sunk beneath the wave,

Each bridge be burned, sooner than carry thee
Across the Loire, the bound'ry of thy realm,
The Stygian flood, o'er which there's no return.

CHAS. What could be done I have done. I have
offer'd,

In single fight, to combat for my crown. —
I was refused. In vain my people bleed,
In vain my towns are levell'd with the dust.
Shall I, like that unnatural mother, see
My child in pieces severed with the sword?
No; I forego my claim, that it may live.

DUNOIS. . How, Sire! Is this fit language for a
king?

Is a crown thus renounced? Thy meanest subject,
For his opinion's sake, his hate and love,
Sets property and life upon a cast;
When civil war hangs out her bloody flag
Each private end is drowned in party zeal.
The husbandman forsakes his plough, the wife
Neglects her distaff; children, and old men,
Don the rude garb of war; the citizen
Consigns his town to the devouring flames,
The peasant burns the produce of his fields;
And all to injure or advantage thee,
And to achieve the purpose of his heart.
Men show no mercy, and they wish for none,
When they at honour's call maintain the fight,
Or for their idols or their gods contend.
A truce to such effeminate pity, then,
Which is not suited to a monarch's breast.
— Thou didst not heedlessly provoke the war:
As it commenced, so let it spend its fury.
It is the law of destiny that nations
Should for their monarchs immolate themselves,
We Frenchmen recognise this sacred law,
Nor would annul it. Base, indeed, the nation,
That for its honour ventures not its all.

CHAS. (*to the SENATORS*) You've heard my last resolve — expect no other.

May God protect you! I can do no more.

DUNOIS. As thou dost turn thy back upon thy realm,
So may the God of battle aye avert
His visage from thee. Thou forsak'st thyself,
So I forsake thee. Not the power combined
Of England and rebellious Burgundy,
Thy own mean spirit hurls thee from the throne.
Born heroes ever were the kings of France;
Thou wert a craven even from thy birth.

[*To the SENATORS.*

The king abandons you. But I will throw
Myself into your town — my father's town —
And 'neath its ruins find a soldier's grave.

[*He is about to depart. — AGNES SOREL detains him.*

SOREL (*to the KING*) Oh let him not depart in anger
from thee!

Harsh words his lips have utter'd, but his heart
Is true as gold. 'Tis he, himself, my king,
Who loves thee, and hath often bled for thee.
Dunois! confess, the heat of noble wrath
Made thee forget thyself — and oh, do thou
Forgive a faithful friend's o'erhasty speech!
Come! let me quickly reconcile your hearts,
Ere anger bursteth forth in quenchless flame!

[DUNOIS *looks fixedly at the KING, and appears to await an answer.*

CHAS. Our way lies over the Loire. Du Chatel!
See all our equipage embarked.

DUNOIS. (*quickly to SOREL*) Farewell!

[*He turns quickly around, and goes out. The SENATORS follow.*

SOREL. (*wringing her hands in despair*) O, if he
goes, we are forsaken quite!

— Follow, La Hire! O seek to soften him!

[LA HIRE *goes out.*

SCENE VI.

CHARLES, SOREL, DU CHATEL.

CHAS. Is, then, the sceptre such a peerless treasure?
Is it so hard to loose it from our grasp?
Believe me, 'tis more galling to endure
The domineering rule of these proud vassals.
To be dependent on their will and pleasure,
Is, to a noble heart, more bitter far
Than to submit to fate.

[*To DU CHATEL, who still lingers.*
Du Chatel, go

And do what I commanded!

DU CHAT. (*throws himself at the KING'S feet*)

Oh, my king!

CHAS. No more! Thou'st heard my absolute
resolve!

DU CHAT. Sire! with the Duke of Burgundy make
peace!

'Tis the sole outlet from destruction left!

CHAS. Thou giv'st this counsel, and thy blood alone
Can ratify this peace?

DU CHAT. Here is my head.
I oft have risked it for thee in the fight,
And with a joyful spirit I, for thee,
Would lay it down upon the block of death.
Conciliate the duke! Deliver me
To the full measure of his wrath, and let
My flowing blood appease the ancient hate!

CHAS. (*looks at him for some time in silence, and
with deep emotion*)

Can it be true? Am I, then, sunk so low,
That even friends, who read my inmost heart,
Point out, for my escape, the path of shame?

Yes, now I recognise my abject fall.
My honour is no more confided in.

DU CHAT. Reflect —

CHAS. Be silent, and incense me not! —
Had I ten realms, on which to turn my back,
With my friend's life I would not purchase them.
— Do what I have commanded. Hence, and see
My equipage embarked.

DU CHAT. 'Twill speedily
Be done.

[*He stands up and retires.* — AGNES SOREL *weeps passionately.*

SCENE VII.

The Royal Palace at Chinon.

CHARLES, AGNES SOREL.

CHAS. (*seizing the hand of AGNES*) My Agnes, be
not sorrowful!

Beyond the Loire we still shall find a France;
We are departing to a happier land,
Where laughs a milder, an unclouded sky,
And gales more genial blow; we there shall meet
More gentle manners; song abideth there,
And love and life in richer beauty bloom.

SOREL. Oh, must I contemplate this day of woe!
The king must roam in banishment! the son
Depart, an exile, from his father's house,
And turn his back upon his childhood's home!
O pleasant, happy land, that we forsake,
Ne'er shall we tread thee joyously again!

SCENE VIII.

LA HIRE *returns*; CHARLES, SOREL.

SOREL. You come alone? You do not bring him
back? [*Observing him more closely.*

La Hire! What news? What does that look announce?

Some new calamity?

HIRE. Calamity

Hath spent itself; sunshine is now return'd.

SOREL. What is it? I implore you.

HIRE. (*to the KING*) Summon back

The delegates from Orleans!

CHAS. Why? What is it?

HIRE. Summon them back! Thy fortune is reversed.

A battle has been fought, and thou hast conquer'd.

SOREL. Conquer'd! O heavenly music of that word.

CHAS. La Hire! A fabulous report deceives thee:
Conquer'd!—In conquest I believe no more.

HIRE. Still greater wonders thou wilt soon believe.
— Here cometh the archbishop. To thine arms
He leadeth back Dunois. —

SOREL. O beauteous flower
Of victory, which doth the heavenly fruits
Of peace and reconciliation bear at once!

SCENE IX.

The same. ARCHBISHOP OF RHEIMS, DUNOIS, DU CHATEL, *with* RAOUL, *a Knight in armour.*

ARCHB. (*leading DUNOIS to the KING, and joining their hands*)

Princes, embrace! Let rage and discord cease,
Since Heaven itself hath for our cause declared.

[DUNOIS *embraces the KING.*

CHAS. Relieve my wonder and perplexity.
What may this solemn earnestness portend?
Whence this unlook'd-for change of fortune?

ARCHB. (*leads the Knight forward, and presents him to the KING*) Speak!

RAOUL. We had assembled sixteen regiments
Of Lotharingian troops, to join your host;
And Baudricourt, a knight of Vaucouleurs,
Was our commander. Having gain'd the heights
By Vermanton, we wound our downward way
Into the valley water'd by the Yonne;
There, in the plain before us, lay the foe,
And when we turn'd, arms glitter'd in our rear.
We saw ourselves surrounded by two hosts,
And could not hope for conquest or for flight.
Then sank the bravest heart, and in despair
We all prepared to lay our weapons down.
The leaders with each other anxiously
Sought counsel and found none, — when to our
eyes

A spectacle of wonder show'd itself!
For suddenly from forth the thickets' depths
A maiden, on her head a polish'd helm,
Like a war-goddess, issued; terrible
Yet lovely was her aspect, and her hair

In dusky ringlets round her shoulders fell.
 A heavenly radiance shone around the height;
 When she upraised her voice and thus address'd
 us:

"Why be dismay'd, brave Frenchmen? On the foe!
 Were they more numerous than the ocean sands,
 God and the holy Maiden lead you on!"
 Then quickly from the standard-bearer's hand
 She snatch'd the banner, and before our troop
 With valiant bearing strode the wond'rous maid.
 Silent with awe, scarce knowing what we did,
 The banner and the Maiden we pursue,
 And, fired with ardour, rush upon the foe,
 Who, much amazed, stand motionless and view
 The miracle with fix'd and wondering gaze. —
 Then, as if seized by terror sent from God,
 They suddenly betake themselves to flight,
 And, casting arms and armour to the ground,
 Disperse in wild disorder o'er the field.
 No leader's call, no signal now avails;
 Senseless from terror, without looking back,
 Horses and men plunge headlong in the stream,
 Where they without resistance are despatch'd.
 It was a slaughter rather than a fight!
 Two thousand of the foe bestrew'd the field,
 Not reckoning numbers swallow'd by the flood,
 While of our company not one was slain.

CHAS. 'Tis strange, by Heaven! most wonderful
 and strange!

SOREL. A maiden work'd this miracle, you say?
 Whence did she come? Who is she?

RAOUL. Who she is
 She will reveal to no one but the king!
 She calls herself a seer and prophetess
 Ordain'd by God, and promises to raise
 The siege of Orleans ere the moon shall change.
 The people credit hër, and thirst for war.

The host she follows — she'll be here anon.

[*The ringing of bells is heard, together with the clang of arms.*]

Hark to the din! The pealing of the bells!

'Tis she! The people greet God's messenger.

CHAS. (to DU CHATEL) Conduct her hither. —

[*To the ARCHBISHOP.*]

What should I believe?

A maiden brings me conquest even now,

When nought can save me but a hand divine!

This is not in the common course of things.

And dare I here believe a miracle?

MANY VOICES. (*behind the scene*) Hail to the
Maiden! — the deliverer!

CHAS. She comes! Dunois, now occupy my place!

We will make trial of this wond'rous maid.

Is she indeed inspired and sent by God,

She will be able to discern the king.

[*DUNOIS seats himself; the KING stands at his right hand, AGNES SOREL near him, the ARCHBISHOP and the others opposite; so that the intermediate space remains vacant.*]

SCENE X.

The same. JOHANNA, accompanied by the Councillors and many Knights, who occupy the background of the scene; she advances with noble bearing, and slowly surveys the company.

DUNOIS. (*after a long and solemn pause*) Art thou the wondrous Maiden —

JOHAN. (*interrupts him, regarding him with dignity*)

Bastard of Orleans, thou wilt tempt thy God!

This place abandon, which becomes thee not!

To this more mighty one the Maid is sent.

[*With a firm step she approaches the KING, bows one knee before him, and, rising immediately, steps back. All present express their astonishment, DUNOIS forsakes his seat, which is occupied by the KING.*

CHAS. Maiden, thou ne'er hast seen my face before. Whence hast thou then this knowledge?

JOHAN. Thee I saw
When none beside, save God in heaven, beheld thee.

[*She approaches the KING and speaks mysteriously.*
Bethink thee, dauphin, in the bygone night!
When all around lay buried in deep sleep,
Thou from thy couch didst rise and offer up
An earnest prayer to God. Let these retire
And I will name the subject of thy prayer.

CHAS. What I to Heaven confided need not be
From men conceal'd. Disclose to me my prayer,
And I shall doubt no more that God inspires thee.

JOHAN. Three prayers thou offer'dst, dauphin;
listen now
Whether I name them to thee! Thou didst pray
That if there were appended to this crown
Unjust possession, or if heavy guilt
Not yet atoned for, from thy father's times,
Occasion'd this most lamentable war,
God would accept thee as a sacrifice,
Have mercy on thy people, and pour forth
Upon thy head the chalice of his wrath.

CHAS. (*steps back with awe*) Who art thou, mighty
one? Whence comest thou?

[*All express their astonishment.*

JOHAN. To God thou offeredst this second prayer:
That if it were his will and high decree
To take away the sceptre from thy race,
And from thee to withdraw whate'er thy sires,
The monarchs of this kingdom, once possess'd,
He in his mercy would preserve to thee

Three priceless treasures — a contented heart,
Thy friend's affection, and thine Agnes' love.

[*The KING conceals his face : the spectators express
their astonishment. — After a pause.*

Thy third petition shall I name to thee ?

CHAS. Enough — I credit thee ! This doth surpass

Mere human knowledge : thou art sent by God !

ARCHB. Who art thou, wonderful and holy maid ?
What favour'd region bore thee ? What blest pair,
Belov'd of Heaven, may claim thee as their child ?

JOHAN. Most reverend father, I am nam'd Johanna,
I am a shepherd's lowly daughter, born
In Dom Remi, a village of my king,
Included in the diocese of Toul,
And from a child I kept my father's sheep.
— And much and frequently I heard them tell
Of the strange islanders, who o'er the sea
Had come to make us slaves, and on us force
A foreign lord, who loveth not the people ;
How the great city, Paris, they had seized,
And had usurp'd dominion o'er the realm.
Then earnestly God's Mother I implor'd
To save us from the shame of foreign chains,
And to preserve to us our lawful king.
Not distant from my native village stands
An ancient image of the Virgin blest,
To which the pious pilgrims oft repair'd ;
Hard by a holy oak, of blessed power,
Standeth, far-fam'd through wonders manifold.
Beneath the oak's broad shade I loved to sit,
Tending my flock — my heart still drew me there.
And if by chance among the desert hills
A lambkin strayed, 'twas shown me in a dream,
When in the shadow of this oak I slept.
— And once, when through the night beneath this tree
In pious adoration I had sat,

Resisting sleep, the Holy One appear'd,
Bearing a sword and banner, otherwise
Clad like a shepherdess, and thus she spake:—
" 'Tis I; arise, Johanna! leave thy flock.
The Lord appoints thee to another task!
Receive this banner! Gird thee with this sword!
Therewith exterminate my people's foes;
Conduct to Rheims thy royal master's son,
And crown him with the kingly diadem!"
And I made answer: "How may I presume
To undertake such deeds, a tender maid,
Unpractis'd in the dreadful art of war!"
And she replied: "A maiden pure and chaste
Achieves whate'er on earth is glorious,
If she to earthly love ne'er yields her heart.
Look upon me! a virgin, like thyself;
I to the Christ, the Lord divine, gave birth,
And am myself divine!" — Mine eyelids then
She touch'd, and when I upward turn'd my gaze,
Heaven's wide expanse was fill'd with angel-boys,
Who bore white lilies in their hands, while tones
Of sweetest music floated through the air.
— And thus on three successive nights appear'd
The Holy One, and cried — "Arise, Johanna!
The Lord appoints thee to another task!"
And when the third night she reveal'd herself,
Wrathful she seem'd, and chiding spake these words:
"Obedience, woman's duty here on earth;
Severe endurance is her heavy doom;
She must be purified through discipline;
Who serveth here is glorified above!"
While thus she spake, she let her shepherd garb
Fall from her, and as Queen of Heaven stood forth,
Enshrined in radiant light, while golden clouds
Uphore her slowly to the realms of bliss.

[*All are moved; AGNES SOREL, weeping, hides her
face on the bosom of the KING.*]

ARCHB. (*after a long pause*) Before divine credentials such as these

Each doubt of earthly prudence must subside.
Her deeds attest the truth of what she speaks,
For God alone such wonders can achieve.

DUNOIS. I credit not her wonders, but her eyes,
Which beam with innocence and purity.

CHAS. Am I, a sinner, worthy of such favour?
Infallible, All-searching Eye, thou seest
Mine inmost heart, my deep humility!

JOHAN. Humility shines brightly in the skies;
Thou art abased, hence God exalteth thee.

CHAS. Shall I indeed withstand mine enemies?

JOHAN. France I will lay submissive at thy feet!

CHAS. And Orleans, say'st thou, will not be surrender'd?

JOHAN. The Loire shall sooner roll its waters back.

CHAS. Shall I in triumph enter into Rheims?

JOHAN. I through ten thousand foes will lead thee there.

[*The Knights make a noise with their lances and shields, and evince signs of courage.*]

DUNOIS. Appoint the Maiden to command the host!
We follow blindly whereso'er she leads:
The holy one's prophetic eye shall guide,
And this brave sword from danger shall protect her!

HIRE. A universe in arms we will not fear,
If she, the mighty one, precede our troops.
The God of battle walketh by her side;
Let her conduct us on to victory!

[*The Knights clang their arms and press forward.*]

CHAS. Yes, holy Maiden, do thou lead mine host;
My chiefs and warriors shall submit to thee.
This sword of matchless temper, proved in war,
Sent back in anger by the constable,
Hath found a hand more worthy. Prophetess,
Do thou receive it, and henceforward be —

JOHAN. No, noble dauphin! conquest to my liege
Is not accorded through this instrument
Of earthly might. I know another sword
Wherewith I am to conquer, which to thee,
I, as the Spirit taught, will indicate;
Let it be hither brought.

CHAS. Name it, Johanna.

JOHAN. Send to the ancient town of Fierbois;
There in Saint Catherine's churchyard is a vault
Where lie in heaps the spoils of bygone war.
Among them is the sword which I must use.
It, by three golden lilies, may be known,
Upon the blade impress'd. Let it be brought,
For thou, my liege, shalt conquer through this sword.

CHAS. Perform what she commands.

JOHAN. And a white banner,
Edg'd with a purple border, let me bear.
Upon this banner let the Queen of Heaven
Be pictur'd, with the beauteous Jesus child,
Floating in glory o'er this earthly ball,
For so the Holy Mother show'd it me.

CHAS. So be it as thou sayest.

JOHAN. (*to the ARCHBISHOP*) Reverend bishop,
Lay on my head thy consecrated hands!
Pronounce a blessing, father, on thy child!

[*She kneels down.*]

ARCHB. Not blessings to receive, but to dispense
Art thou appointed. — Go, with power divine!
But we are sinners all and most unworthy.

[*She rises; a PAGE enters.*]

PAGE. A herald from the English generals.

JOHAN. Let him appear, for he is sent by God!

[*The KING motions to the PAGE, who retires.*]

SCENE XI.

The HERALD. *The same.*

CHAS. Thy tidings, herald? What thy message?
Speak!

HER. Who is it, who for Charles of Valois,
The Count of Ponthieu, in this presence speaks?

DUNOIS. Unworthy herald! base, insulting knave!
Dost thou presume the monarch of the French
Thus in his own dominions to deny?
Thou art protected by thine office, else —

HER. One king alone is recognised by France,
And he resideth in the English camp.

CHAS. Peace, peace, good cousin! Speak thy mes-
sage, herald.

HER. My noble general laments the blood
Which hath already flow'd, and still must flow.
Hence, in the scabbard holding back the sword,
Before by storm the town of Orleans falls,
He offers thee an amicable treaty.

CHAS. Proceed!

JOHAN. (*stepping forward*) Permit me, dauphin, in
thy stead,
To parley with this herald.

CHAS. Do so, Maid!
Determine thou, for peace, or bloody war.

JOHAN. (*to the* HERALD) Who sendeth thee? Who
speaketh through thy mouth?

HER. The Earl of Salisbury; the British chief.

JOHAN. Herald, 'tis false! The earl speaks not
through thee,
Only the living speak, the dead are silent.

HER. The earl is well, and full of lusty strength;
He lives to bring down ruin on your heads.

JOHAN. When thou didst quit the British camp, he lived.

This morn, while gazing from Le Tournelle's tower,
A ball from Orleans struck him to the ground.
— Smil'st thou, that I discern what is remote?
Not to my words give credence; but believe
The witness of thine eyes! his funeral train
Thou shalt encounter as thou goest hence!
Now, herald, speak, and do thine errand here.

HER. If what is hidden thou canst thus reveal,
Thou know'st mine errand ere I tell it thee.

JOHAN. It boots me not to know it. But do thou
Give ear unto my words! This message bear
In answer to the lords who sent thee here.
— Monarch of England, and ye haughty dukes,
Bedford and Gloucester, regents of this realm!
To Heaven's high King ye are accountable
For all the blood that hath been shed! Restore
The keys of all the cities ta'en by force,
In opposition to God's holy law!
The Maiden cometh from the King of Heaven
And offers you or peace, or bloody war.
Choose ye! for this I say, that ye may know it:
To you this beauteous realm is not assign'd
By Mary's Son; — but God hath given it
To Charles, my lord and dauphin, who ere long
Will enter Paris with a monarch's pomp,
Attended by the great ones of his realm.
— Now, herald, go, and speedily depart,
For ere thou canst attain the British camp
And do thine errand, is the Maiden there,
To plant the sign of victory at Orleans.

[*She retires. In the midst of a general movement,
the curtain falls.*]

ACT II.

Landscape, bounded by rocks.

SCENE I.

TALBOT and LIONEL, *English Generals*, PHILIP, DUKE OF BURGUNDY, FASTOLFE, and CHATILLON, *with soldiers and banners.*

TALBOT. Here let us make a halt, beneath these rocks,

And pitch our camp, in case our scatter'd troops,

Dispers'd in panic fear, again should rally.

Choose trusty sentinels, and guard the heights!

'Tis true the darkness shields us from pursuit.

And sure I am, unless the foe have wings,

We need not fear surprisal. — Still 'tis well.

To practise caution, for we have to do

With a bold foe, and have sustain'd defeat.

[FASTOLFE goes out with the soldiers.]

LIONEL. Defeat! My general, do not speak that word.

It stings me to the quick to think the French

To-day have seen the backs of Englishmen.

— O, Orleans! Orleans! Grave of England's glory!

Our honour lies upon thy fatal plains,

Defeat most ignominious and burlesque!

Who will in future years believe the tale!

The victors of Poitiers and Agincourt,

Cressy's bold heroes, routed by a woman?

BURG. That must console us. Not by mortal power,

But by the devil, have we been o'erthrown!

TALBOT: The devil of our own stupidity!

—How, Burgundy? Do princes quake and fear
Before the phantom which appals the vulgar?
Credulity is but a sorry cloak

For cowardice — Your people first took flight.

BURG. None stood their ground. The flight was
general.

TALBOT. 'Tis false! Your wing fled first. You
wildly broke

Into our camp, exclaiming: "Hell is loose,
The devil combats on the side of France!"

And thus you brought confusion 'mong our troops.

LIONEL. You can't deny it. Your wing yielded first.

BURG. Because the brunt of battle there commenced.

TALBOT. The Maiden knew the weakness of our
camp;

She rightly judged where fear was to be found.

BURG. How? Shall the blame of our disaster rest
With Burgundy?

LIONEL. By Heav'n! were we alone,
We English, never had we Orleans lost!

BURG. No, truly! — for ye ne'er had Orleans seen!
Who opened you a way into this realm,
And reached you forth a kind and friendly hand,
When you descended on this hostile coast?
Who was it crowned your Henry at Paris,
And unto him subdued the people's hearts?
Had this Burgundian arm not guided you
Into this realm, by Heaven! ye ne'er had seen
The smoke ascending from a single hearth!

LIONEL. Were conquests with big words effected,
duke,

You, doubtless, would have conquered France alone.

BURG. The loss of Orleans angers you, and now
You vent your gall on me, your friend and ally.
What lost us Orleans but your avarice?
The city was prepared to yield to me,
Your envy was the sole impediment.

TALBOT. We did not undertake the siege for you.

BURG. How would it stand with you, if I withdrew
With all my host?

LIONEL. We should not be worse off,
Than when, at Agincourt, we prov'd a match
For you, and all the banded power of France.

BURG. Yet much ye stood in need of our alliance,
The regent purchased it at heavy cost.

TALBOT. Most dearly, with the forfeit of our honour,
At Orleans, have we paid for it to-day.

BURG. Urge me no further, lords. Ye may repent it!
Did I forsake the banners of my king,
Draw down upon my head the traitor's name,
To be insulted thus by foreigners?
Why am I here to combat against France?
If I must needs endure ingratitude,
Let it come rather from my native king!

TALBOT. You're in communication with the dauphin,
We know it well, but we shall soon find means
To guard ourselves 'gainst treason.

BURG. Death and hell!
Am I encounter'd thus? — Chatillon, hark!
Let all my troops prepare to quit the camp.
We will retire into our own domain.

[CHATILLON *goes out.*]

LIONEL. God speed you there! Never did Britain's
fame

More brightly shine, than when she stood alone,
Confiding solely in her own good sword.
Let each one fight his battle for himself,
For 'tis eternal truth, that English blood
Cannot, with honour, blend with blood of France.

SCENE II.

The same. QUEEN ISABEL, attended by a PAGE.

ISABEL. What must I hear? This fatal strife
forbear!

What brain-bewildering planet o'er your minds
Sheds dire perplexity? When unity
Alone can save you, will you part in hate,
And, warring 'mong yourselves, prepare your doom?
— I do entreat you, noble duke, recall
Your hasty order. You, renowned Talbot,
Seek to appease an irritated friend!
Come, Lionel, aid me to reconcile
These haughty spirits, and establish peace.

LIONEL. Not I, madame. It is all one to me.
'Tis my belief, when things are misallied,
The sooner they part company the better.

ISABEL. How? Do the arts of hell, which on the
field
Wrought such disastrous ruin, even here
Bewilder and befool us? Who began
This fatal quarrel? Speak! — Lord general!
Your own advantage did you so forget,
As to offend your worthy friend and ally?
What could you do without his powerful arm?
'Twas he who placed your monarch on the throne.
He holds him there, and he can hurl him thence;
His army strengthens you — still more his name.
Were England all her citizens to pour
Upon our coasts, she never o'er this realm
Would gain dominion, did she stand alone;
No! France can only be subdued by France!

TALBOT. A faithful friend we honour as we ought;
Discretion warns us to beware the false.

BURG. The liar's brazen front beseemeth him
Who would absolve himself from gratitude.

ISABEL. How, noble duke? Could you so far
renounce

Your princely honour, and your sense of shame,
As clasp the hand of him who slew your sire?
Are you so mad to entertain the thought
Of cordial reconciliation with the dauphin,
Whom you, yourself, have hurl'd to ruin's brink?
His overthrow you have well-nigh achieved,
And madly now would you renounce your work?
Here stand your allies. Your salvation lies
In an indissoluble bond with England.

BURG. Far is my thought from treaty with the
dauphin;
But the contempt and insolent demeanour
Of haughty England I will not endure.

ISABEL. Come, noble duke! Excuse a hasty word.
Heavy the grief which bows the general down,
And well you know, misfortune makes unjust.
Come! come! embrace; let me this fatal breach
Repair at once, ere it becomes eternal.

TALBOT. What think you, Burgundy? A noble heart,
By reason vanquish'd, doth confess its fault.
A wise and prudent word the queen hath spoken.
Come, let my hand, with friendly pressure, heal
The wound inflicted by my angry tongue.

BURG. Discreet the counsel offered by the queen!
My just wrath yieldeth to necessity.

ISABEL. 'Tis well! Now with a brotherly embrace
Confirm and seal the new-established bond;
And may the winds disperse what hath been spoken.

[BURGUNDY and TALBOT embrace.]

LIONEL. (*contemplating the group aside*) Hail to
an union by the Furies planned!

ISABEL. Fate hath proved adverse, we have lost a
battle,

But do not, therefore, let your courage sink.
 The dauphin, in despair of heavenly aid,
 Doth make alliance with the powers of hell;
 Vainly his soul he forfeits to the devil,
 For hell itself cannot deliver him.
 A conquering maiden leads the hostile force;
 Yours, I, myself, will lead; to you I'll stand
 In place of maiden or of prophetess.

LIONEL. Madame, return to Paris! We desire
 To war with trusty weapons, not with women.

TALBOT. Go! go! Since your arrival in the camp,
 Fortune hath fled our banners, and our course
 Hath still been retrograde.

BURG. Depart at once!
 Your presence here doth scandalise the host.

ISABEL. *(looks from one to the other with astonishment)*

This, Burgundy, from you? Do you take part
 Against me with these thankless English lords?

BURG. Go! go! The thought of combating for
 you
 Unnerves the courage of the bravest men.

ISABEL. I scarce among you have establish'd peace,
 And you already form a league against me!

TALBOT. Go, in God's name. When you have left
 the camp,
 No devil will again appal our troops.

ISABEL. Say am I not your true confederate?
 Are we not banded in a common cause?

TALBOT. Thank God! your cause of quarrel is not
 ours.

We combat in an honourable strife.

BURG. A father's bloody murder I avenge;
 Stern filial duty consecrates my arms.

TALBOT. Confess at once! Your conduct toward
 the dauphin
 Is an offence alike to God and man.

ISABEL. Curses blast him and his posterity !
The shameless son who sins against his mother !

BURG. Ay ! to avenge a husband and a father !

ISABEL. To judge his mother's conduct he presumed !

LIONEL. That was, indeed, irreverent in a son !

ISABEL. And me, forsooth, he banish'd from the realm !

TALBOT. Urged to the measure by the public voice.

ISABEL. A curse light on him if I e'er forgive him !
Rather than see him on his father's throne —

TALBOT. His mother's honour you would sacrifice !

ISABEL. Your feeble natures cannot comprehend
The vengeance of an outrag'd mother's heart.

Who pleasures me, I love ! who wrongs, I hate.

If he who wrongs me chance to be my son,

All the more worthy is he of my hate.

The life I gave, I will again take back

From him who doth, with ruthless violence,

The bosom rend which bore and nourish'd him.

Ye, who do thus make war upon the dauphin,

What rightful cause have ye to plunder him ?

What crime hath he committed against you ?

What insult are you call'd on to avenge ?

Ambition, paltry envy, goad you on ;

I have a right to hate him — he's my son.

TALBOT. He feels his mother in her dire revenge !

ISABEL. Mean hypocrites ! I hate you and despise.
Together with the world, you cheat yourselves !

With robber-hands you English seek to clutch

This realm of France, where you have no just right,

Nor equitable claim, to so much earth

As could be cover'd by your charger's hoof.

— This duke, too, whom the people style The Good,

Doth to a foreign lord, his country's foe,

For gold betray the birthland of his sires.

And yet is justice ever on your tongue.

— Hypocrisy I scorn. Such as I am,
So let the world behold me!

BURG. It is true!

Your reputation you have well maintain'd.

ISABEL. I've passions and warm blood, and as a
queen

Came to this realm to live, and not to seem.

Should I have lingered out a joyless life

Because the curse of adverse destiny

To a mad consort join'd my blooming youth?

More than my life I prize my liberty,

And who assails me here — But why should I

Stoop to dispute with you about my rights?

Your sluggish blood flows slowly in your veins!

Strangers to pleasure, ye know only rage!

This duke, too, — who, throughout his whole career,

Hath waver'd to and fro, 'twixt good and ill, —

Can neither hate nor love with his whole heart.

— I go to Melun. Let this gentleman,

[Pointing to LIONEL.]

Who doth my fancy please, attend me there,

To cheer my solitude, and you may work

Your own good pleasure! I'll inquire no more

Concerning the Burgundians or the English.

[She beckons to her PAGE, and is about to retire.]

LIONEL. Rely upon us, we will send to Melun

The fairest youths whom we in battle take.

[Coming back.]

ISABEL. Skilful your arm to wield thy sword of
death,

The French alone can round the polish'd phrase.

[She goes out.]

SCENE III.

TALBOT, BURGUNDY, LIONEL.

TALBOT. Heavens! What a woman!

LIONEL. Now, brave generals,
Your counsel! Shall we prosecute our flight,
Or turn, and with a bold and sudden stroke
Wipe out the foul dishonour of to-day?

BURG. We are too weak, our soldiers are dispersed,
The recent terror still unnerves the host.

TALBOT. Blind terror, sudden impulse of a moment,
Alone occasioned our disastrous rout.

This phantom of the terror-stricken brain,
More closely view'd, will vanish into air.

My counsel, therefore, is, at break of day,
To lead the army back, across the stream,
To meet the enemy.

BURG. Consider well —

LIONEL. Your pardon! Here is nothing to consider.
What we have lost we must at once retrieve,
Or look to be eternally disgraced.

TALBOT. It is resolved. To-morrow morn we fight,
This dread-inspiring phantom to destroy,
Which thus doth blind and terrify the host.
Let us in fight encounter this she-devil.

If she oppose her person to our sword,
Trust me, she never will molest us more;
If she avoid our stroke — and be assured
She will not stand the hazard of a battle —
Then is the dire enchantment at an end!

LIONEL. So be it! And to me, my general, leave
This easy, bloodless combat, for I hope
Alive to take this ghost, and in my arms,
Before the Bastard's eyes — her paramour —
To bear her over to the English camp,

To be the sport and mockery of the host.

BURG. Make not too sure.

TALBOT. If she encounter me,
I shall not give her such a soft embrace.

Come now, exhausted nature to restore
Through gentle sleep. At daybreak we set forth.

[*They go out.*]

SCENE IV.

JOHANNA, *with her banner, in a helmet and breastplate, otherwise attired as a woman.* DUNOIS, LA HIRE, Knights, and Soldiers, *appear above upon the rocky path, pass silently over, and appear immediately after on the scene.*

JOHAN. (*to the Knights, who surround her, while the procession continues above*)

The wall is scaled, and we are in the camp!

Now fling aside the mantle of still night,

Which hitherto hath veil'd your silent march,

And your dread presence to the foe proclaim

By your loud battle-cry — God and the Maiden!

ALL. (*exclaim aloud, amidst the loud clang of arms*)

God and the Maiden! [*Drums and trumpets.*]

SENTINELS. (*behind the scene*) The foe! The foe!
The foe!

JOHAN. Ho! torches here! Hurl fire into the tents!

Let the devouring flames augment the horror,

While threatening death doth compass them around

[*Soldiers hasten on, she is about to follow.*]

DUNOIS. (*holding her back*) Thy part thou hast accomplished now, Johanna!

Into the camp thou hast conducted us.

The foe thou hast deliver'd in our hands.

Now from the rush of war remain apart !
The bloody consummation leave to us.

HIRE. Point out the path of conquest to the host ;
Before us, in pure hand, the banner bear,
But wield the fatal weapon not thyself ;
Tempt not the treacherous God of battle, for
He rageth blindly, and he spareth not.

JOHAN. Who dares impede my progress ? Who
presume

The Spirit to control, which guideth me ?
Still must the arrow wing its destin'd flight !
Where danger is, there must Johanna be ;
Nor now, nor here, am I foredoom'd to fall ;
Our monarch's royal brow I first must see
Invested with the round of sovereignty.
No hostile power can rob me of my life,
Till I've accomplish'd the commands of God.

[*She goes out.*

HIRE. Come, let us follow after her, Dunois,
And let our valiant bosoms be her shield ! [*Exit.*

SCENE V.

ENGLISH SOLDIERS *hurry over the stage. Afterward*
TALBOT.

FIRST SOL. The Maiden in the camp !

SEC. SOL. Impossible !

It cannot be ! How came she in the camp ?

THIRD SOL. Why, through the air ! The devil aided
her !

FOURTH AND FIFTH SOL. Fly ! Fly ! We are dead
men !

TALBOT. (*enters*) They heed me not ! — They stay
not at my call !

The sacred bands of discipline are loosed !

As hell had poured her damned legions forth,
 A wild distracting impulse whirls along,
 In one mad throng, the cowardly and brave.
 I cannot rally e'en the smallest troop
 To form a bulwark 'gainst the hostile flood,
 Whose raging billows press into our camp!
 — Do I alone retain my sober senses,
 While all around in wild delirium rave?
 To fly before these weak degenerate Frenchmen
 Whom we in twenty battles have o'erthrown! —
 Who is she then — the irresistible —
 The dread-inspiring goddess, who doth turn
 At once the tide of battle, and transform
 To lions bold, a herd of timid deer?
 A juggling minx, who plays the well-learn'd part
 Of heroine, thus to appal the brave?
 A woman snatch from me all martial fame?
 SOL. (*rushes in*) The Maiden comes! Fly, general!
 fly! fly!
 TALBOT. (*strikes him down*) Fly thou, thyself, to
 hell! This sword shall pierce
 Who talks to me of fear, or coward flight!
 [*He goes out.*]

SCENE VI.

*The prospect opens. The English camp is seen in flames.
 Drums, flight and pursuit. After awhile MONT-
 GOMERY enters.*

MONT. (*alone*) Where shall I flee? Foes all
 around and death! Lo! here
 The furious general, who, with threatening sword,
 prevents
 Escape, and drives us back into the jaws of death.
 The dreadful Maiden there — the terrible — who, like

Devouring flame, destruction spreads; while all around
 Appears no bush wherein to hide — no sheltering cave!
 Oh, would that o'er the sea I néver had come here!
 Me miserable! Empty dreams deluded me —
 Cheap glory to achieve on Gallia's martial fields;
 And I am guided by malignant destiny
 Into this murd'rous fight. — Oh, were I far, far hence.
 Still in my peaceful home, on Severn's flowery banks,
 Where, in my father's house, in sorrow and in tears,
 I left my mother and my fair young bride.

[JOHANNA *appears in the distance.*

Woe's me! What do I see! The dreadful form
 appears!

Arrayed in lurid light, she from the raging fire
 Issues, as from the jaws of hell, a midnight ghost.
 Where shall I go? — where flee? Already, from afar,
 She seizes on me with her eye of fire, and flings
 Her fatal and unerring coil, whose magic folds
 With ever-tightening pressure bind my feet, and make
 Escape impossible! Howe'er my heart rebels,
 I am compell'd to follow with my gaze that form
 Of dread!

[JOHANNA *advances toward him some steps; and
 again remains standing.*

She comes! I will not passively await
 Her furious onset! Imploringly I'll clasp
 Her knees! I'll sue to her for life. She is a woman,
 I may perchance to pity move her by my tears!

[*While he is on the point of approaching her, she
 draws near.*

SCENE VII.

JOHANNA, MONTGOMERY.

JOHAN. Prepare to die! A British mother bore thee!

MONT. (*falls at her feet*) Fall back, terrific one!
Forbear to strike

An unprotected foe! My sword and shield
I've flung aside, and supplicating fall
Defenceless at thy feet. A ransom take!
Extinguish not the precious light of life!
With fair possessions crown'd, my father dwells
In Wales' fair land, where among verdant meads
The winding Severn rolls his silver tide,
And fifty villages confess his sway.
With heavy gold he will redeem his son,
When he shall hear I'm in the camp of France.

JOHAN. Deluded mortal! to destruction doomed!
Thou'rt fallen in the Maiden's hand, from which
Redemption or deliverance there is none.
Had adverse fortune given thee a prey
To the fierce tiger or the crocodile —
Hadst robbed the lion-mother of her brood —
Compassion thou mightst hope to find and pity;
But to encounter me is certain death.
For my dread compact with the spirit realm —
The stern, inviolable — bindeth me
To slay each living thing whom battle's God,
Full charged with doom, delivers to my sword.

MONT. Thy speech is fearful, but thy look is mild;
Not dreadful art thou to contemplate near;
My heart is drawn toward thy lovely form.
O! by the mildness of thy gentle sex,
Attend my prayer. Compassionate my youth.

JOHAN. Name me not woman! Speak not of my sex!

Like to the bodiless spirits, who know nought
Of earth's humanities, I own no sex;
Beneath this vest of steel there beats no heart.

MONT. O! by love's sacred all-pervading power,
To whom all hearts yield homage, I conjure thee.
At home I left behind a gentle bride,
Beauteous as thou, and rich in blooming grace;
Weeping she waiteth her betrothed's return.
O! if thyself dost ever hope to love,
If in thy love thou hopest to be happy,
Then ruthless sever not two gentle hearts,
Together linked in love's most holy bond!

JOHAN. Thou dost appeal to earthly, unknown
 gods,
To whom I yield no homage. Of love's bond,
By which thou dost conjure me, I know nought,
Nor ever will I know this empty service.
Defend thy life, for death doth summon thee.

MONT. Take pity on my sorrowing parents, whom
I left at home. Doubtless thou, too, hast left
Parents, who feel disquietude for thee.

JOHAN. Unhappy man! thou dost remember me
How many mothers, of this land, your arms
Have rendered childless and disconsolate;
How many gentle children fatherless;
How many fair young brides dejected widows!
Let England's mothers now be taught despair,
And learn to weep the bitter tear, oft shed
By the bereav'd and sorrowing wives of France.

MONT. 'Tis hard, in foreign lands to die unwept.

JOHAN. Who call'd you over to this foreign land,
To waste the blooming culture of our fields,
To chase the peasant from his household hearth,
And in our cities' peaceful sanctuary
To hurl the direful thunderbolt of war?

In the delusion of your hearts ye thought
 To plunge in servitude the free-born French,
 And to attach their fair and goodly realm,
 Like a small boat, to your proud English bark!
 Ye fools! The royal arms of France are hung
 Fast by the throne of God; and ye as soon
 From the bright wain of heaven might snatch a star,
 As rend a single village from this realm,
 Which shall remain inviolate for ever!
 — The day of vengeance is at length arrived;
 Not living shall ye measure back the sea,
 The sacred sea — the boundary set by God
 Betwixt our hostile nations — and the which
 Ye ventur'd impiously to overpass.

MONT. (*lets go her hands*) O, I must die! I feel
 the grasp of death!

JOHAN. Die, friend! Why tremble at the approach
 of death,

Of mortals the irrevocable doom?
 Look upon me! I'm born a shepherd maid;
 This hand, accustom'd to the peaceful crook,
 Is all unused to wield the sword of death,
 Yet, snatch'd away from childhood's peaceful haunts,
 From the fond love of father and of sisters,
 Urged by no idle dream of earthly glory,
 But Heaven-appointed to achieve your ruin,
 Like a destroying angel I must roam,
 Spreading dire havoc round me, and at length
 Myself must fall a sacrifice to death!
 Never again shall I behold my home!
 Still many of your people I must slay,
 Still many widows make, but I at length
 Myself shall perish, and fulfil my doom.
 — Now thine fulfil. Arise! resume thy sword,
 And let us fight for the sweet prize of life.

MONT. (*stands up*) Now, if thou art a mortal like
 myself,

Can weapons wound thee, it may be assign'd
To this good arm to end my country's woe,
Thee sending, sorceress, to the depths of hell.
In God's most gracious hands I leave my fate.
Accursed one! to thine assistance call
The fiends of hell! Now combat for thy life!

[*He seizes his sword and shield, and rushes upon her; martial music is heard in the distance.*
— *After a short conflict MONTGOMERY falls.*

SCENE VIII.

JOHAN. (*alone*) To death thy foot did bear thee —
fare thee well!

[*She steps away from him and remains absorbed in thought.*

Virgin, thou workest mightily in me!
My feeble arm thou dost endue with strength,
And steep'st my woman's heart in cruelty.
In pity melts the soul and the hand trembles,
As it did violate some sacred fane,
To mar the goodly person of the foe.
Once I did shudder at the polish'd sheath,
But when 'tis needed, I'm possess'd with strength,
And as it were itself a thing of life,
The fatal weapon, in my trembling grasp,
Self-swayed, inflicteth the unerring stroke.

SCENE IX.

A KNIGHT *with closed visor*, JOHANNA.

KNIGHT. Accursed one! thy hour of death is come!
Long have I sought thee on the battle-field.
Fatal delusion! get thee back to hell,

Whence thou didst issue forth.

JOHAN. Say, who art thou,
Whom his bad genius sendeth in my way?
Princely thy port, no Briton dost thou seem,
For the Burgundian colours stripe thy shield,
Before the which my sword inclines its point.

KNIGHT. Vile castaway! Thou all unworthy art
To fall beneath a prince's noble hand.

The hangman's axe should thy accursed head
Cleave from thy trunk, unfit for such vile use
The royal Duke of Burgundy's brave sword.

JOHAN. Art thou indeed that noble duke himself?

KNIGHT. (*raises his visor*) I'm he, vile creature,
tremble and despair!

The arts of hell shall not protect thee more,
Thou hast till now weak dastards overcome;
Now thou dost meet a man.

SCENE X.

DUNOIS and LA HIRE. *The same.*

DUNOIS. Hold, Burgundy!
Turn! combat now with men, and not with maids.

HIRE. We will defend the holy prophetess;
First must thy weapon penetrate this breast. —

BURG. I fear not this seducing Circe; no,
Nor you, whom she hath changed so shamefully!
Oh blush, Dunois! and do thou blush, La Hire!
To stoop thy valour to these hellish arts —
To be shield-bearer to a sorceress!

Come one — come all! He only who despairs
Of Heaven's protection seeks the aid of hell.

[*They prepare for combat, JOHANNA steps between.*

JOHAN. Forbear!

BURG. Dost tremble for thy lover? Thus
Before thine eyes he shall —

[*He makes a thrust at DUNOIS.*

JOHAN. Dunois, forbear!

Part them, La Hire! no blood of France must flow;
Not hostile weapons must this strife decide.
Above the stars 'tis otherwise decreed.
Fall back! — I say — Attend and venerate
The Spirit, which hath seized, which speaks through
me!

DUNOIS. Why, Maiden, now hold back my up-
raised arm?

Why check the just decision of the sword?
My weapon pants to deal the fatal blow
Which shall avenge and heal the woes of France.

[*She places herself in the midst, and separates the parties.*

JOHAN. Fall back, Dunois! Stand where thou art,
La Hire! [When all is quiet.

Somewhat I have to say to Burgundy.
What would'st thou, Burgundy? Who is the foe
Whom eagerly thy murderous glances seek?
This prince is, like thyself, a son of France, —
This hero is thy countryman, thy friend;
I am a daughter of thy fatherland.
We all, whom thou art eager to destroy,
Are of thy friends; — our longing arms prepare
To clasp, our bending knees to honour thee. —
Our sword 'gainst thee is pointless, and that face
E'en in a hostile helm is dear to us,
For there we trace the features of our king.

BURG. What, syren! wilt thou with seducing
words

Allure thy victim? Cunning sorceress,
Me thou deludest not. Mine ears are closed
Against thy treacherous words; and vainly dart
Thy fiery glances 'gainst this mail of proof.

To arms, Dunois!

With weapons let us fight, and not with words.

DUNOIS. First words, then weapons, Burgundy!
Do words

With dread inspire thee? 'Tis a coward's fear,
And the betrayer of an evil cause.

JOHAN. 'Tis not imperious necessity
Which throws us at thy feet! We do not come
As suppliants before thee. — Look around!
The English tents are level with the ground,
And all the field is cover'd with your slain.
Hark! the war-trumpets of the French resound:
God hath decided — ours the victory!
Our new-cull'd laurel garland with our friend
We fain would share. — Come, noble fugitive!
Oh, come where justice and where victory dwell!
Even I, the messenger of Heaven, extend
A sister's hand to thee. I fain would save
And draw thee over to our righteous cause!
Heaven hath declared for France! Angelic powers,
Unseen by thee, do battle for our king;
With lilies are the holy ones adorn'd.
Pure as this radiant banner is our cause;
Its blessed symbol is the Queen of Heaven.

BURG. Falsehood's fallacious words are full of guile,
But hers are pure and simple as a child's.
If evil spirits borrow this disguise,
They copy innocence triumphantly.
I'll hear no more. To arms, Dunois! to arms!
Mine ear, I feel, is weaker than mine arm.

JOHAN. You call me an enchantress, and accuse
Of hellish arts. — Is it the work of hell
To heal dissension and to foster peace?
Comes holy concord from the depths below?
Say, what is holy, innocent, and good,
If not to combat for our fatherland?
Since when hath nature been so self-opposed,

That Heaven forsakes the just and righteous cause,
While Hell protects it? If my words are true,
Whence could I draw them but from heaven above?
Who ever sought me in my shepherd-walks,
To teach the humble maid affairs of state?
I ne'er have stood with princes, to these lips
Unknown the arts of eloquence. Yet now,
When I have need of it to touch thy heart,
Insight and varied knowledge I possess;
The fate of empires and the doom of kings
Lie clearly spread before my childish mind,
And words of thunder issue from my mouth.

BURG. (*greatly moved, looks at her with emotion and astonishment*)

How is it with me? Doth some heavenly power
Thus strangely stir my spirit's inmost depths?
— This pure, this gentle creature cannot lie!
No, if enchantment blinds me, 'tis from Heaven.
My spirit tells me she is sent from God.

JOHAN. Oh, he is mov'd! I have not pray'd in vain,
Wrath's thundercloud dissolves in gentle tears,
And leaves his brow, while mercy's golden beams
Break from his eyes and gently promise peace.
— Away with arms, now clasp him to your hearts,
He weeps — he's conquer'd, he is ours once more!

[*Her sword and banner fall; she hastens to him with outstretched arms, and embraces him in great agitation.* LA HIRE and DUNOIS throw down their swords, and hasten also to embrace him.

ACT III.

Residence of the KING at Chalons on the Marne.

SCENE I.

DUNOIS, LA HIRE.

DUNOIS. We have been true heart-friends, brothers
in arms,

Still have we battled in a common cause,
And held together amid toil and death.
Let not the love of woman rend the bond
Which hath resisted every stroke of fate.

HIRE. Hear me, my prince!

DUNOIS. You love the wondrous maid,
And well I know the purpose of your heart.
You think without delay to seek the king,
And to entreat him to bestow on you
Her hand in marriage. — Of your bravery
The well-earn'd guerdon, he cannot refuse
But know, — ere I behold her in the arms
Of any other —

HIRE. Listen to me, prince!

DUNOIS. 'Tis not the fleeting passion of the eye
Attracts me to her. My unconquer'd sense
Had set at nought the fiery shafts of love
Till I beheld this wondrous maiden, sent
By a divine appointment to become
The saviour of this kingdom, and my wife;
And on the instant in my heart I vow'd
A sacred oath, to bear her home, my bride.
For she alone who is endowed with strength
Can be the strong man's friend. This glowing heart
Longs to repose upon a kindred breast,
Which can sustain and comprehend its strength.

HIRE. How dare I venture, prince, my poor deserts
To measure with your name's heroic fame!
When Count Dunois appeareth in the lists,
Each humbler suitor must forsake the field;
Still it doth ill become a shepherd maid
To stand as consort by your princely side.
The royal current in your veins would scorn
To mix with blood of baser quality.

DUNOIS. She, like myself, is holy Nature's child,
A child divine — hence we by birth are equal.
She bring dishonour on a prince's hand,
Who is the holy Angel's bride, whose head
Is by a heavenly glory circled round,
Whose radiance far outshineth earthly crowns,
Who seeth lying far beneath her feet
All that is greatest, highest, of this earth;
For thrones on thrones, ascending to the stars,
Would fail to reach the height where she abides
In angel majesty!

HIRE. Our monarch must decide.

DUNOIS. Not so! she must
Decide! Free hath she made this realm of France,
And she herself must freely give her heart.

HIRE. Here comes the king!

SCENE II.

CHARLES, AGNES SOREL, DU CHATEL, *and* CHATILLON.

The same.

CHAS. (*to* CHATILLON) He comes! My title he will
recognise,
And do me homage as his sovereign liege?

CHATIL. Here, in his royal town of Chalons, Sire,

The duke, my master, will fall down before thee.
 — He did command me, as my lord and king,
 To give thee greeting. He'll be here anon.

SOREL. He comes! Hail beauteous and auspicious
 day,

Which bringeth joy, and peace, and reconcilment!

CHATIL. The duke, attended by two hundred
 knights,

Will hither come; he at thy feet will kneel;
 But he expecteth not that thou to him
 Shouldst yield the cordial greeting of a kinsman.

CHAS. I long to clasp him to my throbbing heart.

CHATIL. The duke entreats that at this interview
 No word he spoken of the ancient strife!

CHAS. In Lethe be the past for ever sunk!
 The smiling future now invites our gaze.

CHATIL. All who have combated for Burgundy
 Shall be included in the amnesty.

CHAS. So shall my realm be doubled in extent;

CHATIL. Queen Isabel, if she consent thereto,
 Shall also be included in the peace.

CHAS. She maketh war on me, not I on her.
 With her alone it rests to end our quarrel.

CHATIL. Twelve knights shall answer for thy royal
 word.

CHAS. My word is sacred.

CHATIL. The archbishop shall
 Between you break the consecrated Host,
 As pledge and seal of cordial reconcilment.

CHAS. Let my eternal weal be forfeited,
 If my hand's friendly grasp belie my heart.
 What other surety doth the duke require?

CHATIL. (*glancing at DU CHATEL*) I see one stand-
 ing here, whose presence, Sire,
 Perchance might poison the first interview.

[DU CHATEL *retires in silence.*

CHAS. Depart, Du Chatel, and remain conceal'd

Until the duke can bear thee in his sight.

[*He follows him with his eye, then hastens after and embraces him.*]

True-hearted friend! Thou wouldst far more than this
Have done for my repose! [Exit DU CHATEL.

CHATIL. This instrument doth name the other
points.

CHAS. (*to the ARCHBISHOP*) Let it be settled. We
agree to all.

We count no price too high to gain a friend.

Go now, Dunois, and with a hundred knights

Give courteous conduct to the noble duke.

Let the troops, garlanded with verdant boughs,

Receive their comrades with a joyous welcome.

Be the whole town arrayed in festal pomp,

And let the bells, with joyous peal, proclaim

That France and Burgundy are reconcil'd.

[*A PAGE enters. Trumpets sound.*]

Hark! What importeth that loud trumpet's call?

PAGE. The Duke of Burgundy hath stayed his
march. [Exit.

DUNOIS. Up! forth to meet him!

[Exit with LA HIRE and CHATILLON.

CHAS. (*to SOREL*) My Agnes! thou dost weep!
Even my strength

Doth almost fail me at this interview.

How many victims have been doom'd to fall

Ere we could meet in peace and reconciliation!

But every storm at length suspends its rage,

Day follows on the murkiest night; and still,

When comes the hour, the latest fruits mature!

ARCHB. (*at the window*) The thronging crowds im-
pede the duke's advance;

He scarce can free himself. They lift him now

From off his horse; they kiss his spurs, his mantle.

CHAS. They're a good people, in whom love flames
forth

As suddenly as wrath. — In how brief space
 They do forget that 'tis this very duke
 Who slew, in fight, their fathers and their sons ;
 The moment swallows up the whole of life !
 — Be tranquil, Sorel ! E'en thy passionate joy
 Perchance might to his conscience prove a thorn.
 Nothing should either shame or grieve him here.

SCENE III.

The DUKE OF BURGUNDY, DUNOIS, LA HIRE, CHATILLON, and two other Knights of the DUKE'S train. The DUKE remains standing at the door ; the KING inclines toward him ; BURGUNDY immediately advances, and in the moment when he is about to throw himself upon his knees, the KING receives him in his arms.

CHAS. You have surprised us — it was our intent
 To fetch you hither — but your steeds are fleet.

BURG. They bore me to my duty.

[He embraces SOREL, and kisses her brow.

With your leave !

At Arras, niece, it is our privilege,
 And no fair damsel may exemption claim.

CHAS. Rumour doth speak your court the seat of love,
 The mart where all that's beautiful must tarry.

BURG. We are a traffic-loving people, Sire ;
 Whate'er of costly earth's wide realms produce,
 For show and for enjoyment, is displayed
 Upon our mart at Bruges ; but above all
 There woman's beauty is præminent.

SOREL. More precious far is woman's truth ; but it
 Appareth not upon the public mart.

CHAS. Kinsman, 'tis rumour'd to your prejudice,
 That woman's fairest virtue you despise.

BURG. The heresy inflicteth on itself
The heaviest penalty. 'Tis well for you,
From your own heart, my king, you learn'd betimes
What a wild life hath late reveal'd to me.

[*He perceives the ARCHBISHOP, and extends his hand.*
Most reverend minister of God ! your blessing !
You still are to be found on duty's path,
Where those must walk who would encounter you.

ARCHB. Now let my Master call me when he will ;
My heart is full, I can with joy depart,
Since that mine eyes have seen this day !

BURG. (*to SOREL*) 'Tis said
That of your precious stones you robb'd yourself,
Therefrom to forge 'gainst me the tools of war ?
Bear you a soul so martial ? Were you then
So resolute to work my overthrow ?

Well, now our strife is over ; what was lost
Will in due season all be found again.
Even your jewels have return'd to you.
Against me to make war they were design'd ;
Receive them from me as a pledge of peace.

[*He receives a casket from one of the Attendants,
and presents it to her open. SOREL, embar-
rassed, looks at the KING.*

CHAS. Receive this present ; 'tis a twofold pledge
Of reconciliation, and of fairest love.

BURG. (*placing a diamond rose in her hair*) Why,
is it not the diadem of France ?
With full as glad a spirit I would place
The golden circle on this lovely brow.

[*Taking her hand significantly.*
And count on me if, at some future time,
You should require a friend !

[*AGNES SOREL bursts into tears, and steps aside.*
*The KING struggles with his feelings. The by-
standers contemplate the two PRINCES with
emotion.*

BURG. (*after gazing around the circle, throws himself into the KING'S arms*) O, my king!

[*At the same moment the three Burgundian Knights hasten to DUNOIS, LA HIRE, and the ARCH-BISHOP. They embrace each other. The two PRINCES remain for a time speechless in each other's arms.*]

I could renounce you! I could bear you hate!

CHAS. Hush! hush! No further!

BURG. I this English king
Could crown! Swear fealty to this foreigner!
And you, my sovereign, into ruin plunge!

CHAS. Forget it! Everything's forgiven now,
This single moment doth obliterate all!
'Twas a malignant star! A destiny!

BURG. (*grasps his hand*) Believe me, Sire, I'll make
amends for all.

Your bitter sorrow I will compensate;
You shall receive your kingdom back entire,
A solitary village shall not fail!

CHAS. We are united. Now I fear no foe.

BURG. Trust me, it was not with a joyous spirit
That I bore arms against you. Did you know —
O wherefore sent you not this messenger?

[*Pointing to SOREL.*]

I must have yielded to her gentle tears.
— Henceforth, since breast to breast we have embraced,
No power of hell again shall sever us!
My erring course ends here. His sovereign's heart
Is the true resting place for Burgundy.

ARCHB. (*steps between them*) Ye are united, princes!
France doth rise

A renovated phoenix from its ashes.
Th' auspicious future greets us with a smile,
The country's bleeding wounds will heal again,
The villages, the desolated towns,
Rise in new splendour from their ruin'd heaps,

The fields array themselves in beauteous green —
But those who, victims of your quarrel, fell,
The dead, rise not again ; the bitter tears,
Caused by your strife, remain for ever wept !
One generation hath been doom'd to woe,
On their descendants dawns a brighter day,
The gladness of the son wakes not the sire.
This the dire fruitage of your brother-strife !
Oh, princes ! learn from hence to pause with dread,
Ere from its scabbard ye unsheathe the sword.
The man of power lets loose the God of war,
But not, obedient, as from fields of air
Returns the falcon to the sportsman's hand,
Doth the wild deity obey the call
Of mortal voice ; nor will the Saviour's hand
A second time forth issue from the clouds.

BURG. O Sire ! an angel walketh by your side.
— Where is she ? Why do I behold her not ?

CHAS. Where is Johanna ? Wherefore faileth she
To grace the festival we owe to her ?

ARCHB. She loves not, Sire, the idless of the court,
And when the heavenly mandate calls her not
Forth to the world's observance, she retires,
And doth avoid the notice of the crowd !
Doubtless, unless the welfare of the realm
Claims her regard, she communes with her God,
For still a blessing on her steps attends.

SCENE IV.

The same.

JOHANNA *enters.* *She is clad in armour, and wears a garland in her hair.*

CHAS. Thou comest as a priestess deck'd, Johanna,
To consecrate the union form'd by thee!

BURG. How dreadful was the maiden in the fight!
How lovely circled by the beams of peace!
— My word, Johanna, have I now fulfill'd?
Art thou contented? Have I thine applause?

JOHAN. The greatest favour thou hast shown thyself.
Array'd in blessed light thou shinest now,
Who didst erewhile with bloody ominous ray,
Hang like a moon of terror in the heavens.

[*Looking around.*
Many brave knights I find assembled here,
And joy's glad radiance beams in every eye;
One mourner, one alone, I have encounter'd,
He must conceal himself, where all rejoice.

BURG. And who is conscious of such heavy guilt,
That of our favour he must needs despair?

JOHAN. May he approach? Oh, tell me that he
may, —

Complete thy merit. Void the reconciliation
That frees not the whole heart. A drop of hate,
Remaining in the cup of joy, converts
The blessed draught to poison. — Let there be
No deed so stain'd with blood, that Burgundy
Cannot forgive it on this day of joy!

BURG. Ha! now I understand!

JOHAN. And thou'lt forgive?
Thou wilt indeed forgive? — Come in, Du Chatel!

[She opens the door and leads in DU CHATEL, who remains standing at a distance.]

The duke is reconciled to all his foes,
And he is so to thee.

[DU CHATEL approaches a few steps nearer, and tries to read the countenance of the DUKE.]

BURG. What makest thou

Of me, Johanna? Know'st thou what thou askest?

JOHAN. A gracious sovereign throws his portals
wide,

Admitting every guest, excluding none;
As freely as the firmament the world,
So mercy must encircle friend and foe.
Impartially the sun pours forth his beams
Through all the regions of infinity;
The heaven's reviving dew falls everywhere,
And brings refreshment to each thirsty plant;
Whate'er is good, and cometh from on high,
Is universal, and without reserve;
But in the heart's recesses darkness dwells!

BURG. Oh, she can mould me to her wish; my
heart

Is in her forming hand like melted wax.

— Du Chatel, I forgive thee — come, embrace me!

Shade of my sire! oh, not with wrathful eye
Behold me clasp the hand that shed thy blood.

Ye death-gods, reckon not to my account,
That my dread oath of vengeance I abjure.

With you, in yon dear realm of endless night,
There beats no human heart, and all remains
Eternal, steadfast, and immovable.

Here in the light of day 'tis otherwise.

Man, living, feeling man, is aye the sport
Of the o'ermost ring present.

CHAS. *(to JOHANNA)* Lofty maid!

What owe I not to thee! How truly now
Hast thou fulfill'd thy word, — how rapidly

Reversed my destiny! Thou hast appeased
 My friends, and in the dust o'erwhelm'd my foes;
 From foreign yokes redeem'd my cities. — Thou
 Hast all achieved. — Speak, how can I reward thee?

JOHAN. Sire, in prosperity be still humane,
 As in misfortune thou hast ever been;
 — And on the height of greatness ne'er forget
 The value of a friend in times of need;
 Thou hast approved it in adversity.
 Refuse not to the lowest of thy people
 The claims of justice and humanity,
 For thy deliv'rer from the fold was call'd.
 Beneath thy royal sceptre, thou shalt gather
 The realm entire of France. Thou shalt become
 The root and ancestor of mighty kings;
 Succeeding monarchs, in their regal state,
 Shall those outshine who fill'd the throne before.
 Thy stock, in majesty, shall bloom so long
 As it stands rooted in the people's love.
 Pride only can achieve its overthrow,
 And from the lowly station, whence to-day
 God summon'd thy deliv'rer, ruin dire
 Obscurely threatens thy crime-polluted sons!

BURG. Exalted maid! Possessed with sacred fire!
 If thou canst look into the gulf of time,
 Speak also of my race! Shall coming years
 With ampler honours crown my princely line?

JOHAN. High as the throne, thou, Burgundy, hast
 built

Thy seat of power, and thy aspiring heart
 Would raise still higher, even to the clouds,
 The lofty edifice. — But from on high
 A hand omnipotent shall check its rise.
 Fear thou not hence the downfall of thy house!
 Its glory in a maiden shall survive;
 Upon her breast shall sceptre-bearing kings,
 The people's shepherds, bloom. Their ample sway

Shall o'er two realms extend, they shall ordain
Laws to control the known world, and the new,
Which God still veils behind the pathless waves.

CHAS. O, if the Spirit doth reveal it, speak;
Shall this alliance, which we now renew,
In distant ages still unite our sons?

JOHAN. (*after a pause*) Sovereigns and kings! dis-
union shun with dread!

Wake not contention from the murky cave
Where he doth lie asleep, for once aroused
He cannot soon be quell'd! He doth beget
An iron brood, a ruthless progeny;
Wildly the sweeping conflagration spreads.
— Be satisfied! Seek not to question further!
In the glad present let your hearts rejoice,
The future let me shroud!

SOREL. Exalted maid!

Thou canst explore my heart, thou redest there
If after worldly greatness it aspires;
To me too give a joyous oracle.

JOHAN. Of empires only I discern the doom;
In thine own bosom lies thy destiny!

DUNOIS. What, holy maid, will be thy destiny?
Doubtless, for thee, who art belov'd of Heaven,
The fairest earthly happiness shall bloom,
For thou art pure and holy.

JOHAN. Happiness
Abideth yonder, with our God, in heaven.

CHAS. Thy fortune be henceforth thy monarch's
care!

For I will glorify thy name in France,
And the remotest age shall call thee blest.
Thus I fulfil my word. — Kneel down!

[*He draws his sword and touches her with it.*

And rise

A noble! I, thy monarch, from the dust
Of thy mean birth exalt thee. — In the grave

Thy fathers I ennoble — thou shalt bear
Upon thy shield the fleur-de-lis, and be
Of equal lineage with the best in France.
Only the royal blood of Valois shall
Be nobler than thine own ! The highest peer
Shall feel himself exalted by thy hand ;
To wed thee nobly, maid, shall be my care.

DUNOIS. (*advancing*) My heart made choice of her
when she was lowly,
The recent honour which encircles her
Neither exalts her merit, nor my love.
Here in my sovereign's presence, and before
This holy bishop, maid, I tender thee
My hand, and take thee as my princely wife,
If thou esteem me worthy to be thine.

CHAS. Resistless maiden ! wonder thou dost add
To wonder ! Yes, I now believe that nought's
Impossible to thee. Thou hast subdued
This haughty heart, which still hath scoff'd till now,
At love's omnipotence.

HIRE. (*advancing*) If I have read
Aright Johanna's soul, her modest heart's
Her fairest jewel. — She deserveth well
The homage of the great, but her desires
Soar not so high. — She striveth not to reach
A giddy eminence ; an honest heart's
True love contents her, and the quiet lot
Which with this hand I humbly proffer her.

CHAS. Thou too, La Hire ! two brave competitors, —
Peers in heroic virtue and renown !
— Wilt thou, who hast appeased mine enemies,
My realms united, part my dearest friends ?
One only can possess her ; I esteem
Each to be justly worthy such a prize.
Speak, maid ! thy heart alone must here decide.

SOREL. The noble maiden is surprised, her cheek
Is crimson'd over with a modest blush.

Let her have leisure to consult her heart,
And in confiding friendship to unseal
Her long-closed bosom. Now the hour is come
When, with a sister's love, I also may
Approach the maid severe, and offer her
This silent faithful breast. — Permit us women
Alone to weigh this womanly affair;
Do you await the issue.

CHAS. (*about to retire*) Be it so!

JOHAN. No, Sire, not so! the crimson on my
cheek

Is not the blush of bashful modesty.
Nought have I for this noble lady's ear
Which in this presence I may not proclaim.
The choice of these brave knights much honours me,
But I did not forsake my shepherd-walks,
To chase vain worldly splendour, nor array
My tender frame in panoply of war,
To twine the bridal garland in my hair.
Far other labour is assign'd to me,
Which a pure maiden can alone achieve.
I am the soldier of the Lord of Hosts,
And to no mortal man can I be wife.

ARCHB. To be a fond companion unto man
Is woman born — when nature she obeys,
Most wisely she fulfils high Heaven's decree!
When his behest who call'd thee to the field
Shall be accomplish'd, thou'lt resign thine arms,
And once again rejoin the softer sex,
Whose gentle nature thou dost now forego,
And which from war's stern duties is exempt.

JOHAN. Most reverend sir! as yet I cannot say
What work the Spirit will enjoin on me.
But when the time comes round, his guiding voice
Will not be mute, and it I will obey.
Now he commands me to complete my task,
My royal master's brow is still uncrown'd,

Still unanointed is his sacred head ;
My sovereign cannot yet be call'd a king.

CHAS. We are advancing on the way to Rheims.

JOHAN. Let us not linger, for the enemy
Is planning how to intercept thy course :
I will conduct thee through the midst of them !

DUNOIS. And when thy holy mission is fulfill'd,
When we in triumph shall have enter'd Rheims,
Wilt thou not then permit me, sacred maid —

JOHAN. If Heaven ordain that, from the strife of
death,

Crown'd with the wreath of conquest, I return,
My task will be accomplish'd — and the maid
Hath thenceforth in the palace nought to do.

CHAS. (*taking her hand*) It is the Spirit's voice
impels thee now ;

Love in thy bosom, Heaven-inspir'd, is mute ;
'Twill not be ever so ; believe me, maid !

Our weapons will repose, and victory
Will by the hand lead forward gentle peace.

Joy will return again to every breast,
And softer feelings wake in every heart, —

They will awaken also in thy breast,
And tears of gentle longing thou wilt weep,

Such as thine eye hath never shed before ;
— This heart, which Heaven now occupies alone,

Will fondly open to an earthly friend —
Thousands thou hast till now redeem'd and bless'd,
Thou wilt at length conclude by blessing one !

JOHAN. Art weary, dauphin, of the heavenly vision,
That thou its vessel wouldst annihilate ?

The holy maiden, sent to thee by God,
Degrade, reducing her to common dust ?

Ye blind of heart ! O ye of little faith !

God's glory shines around you ; to your gaze

He doth reveal his wonders, and ye see

Nought but a woman in me. Dare a woman

In iron panoply array herself,
 And boldly mingle in the strife of men?
 Woe, woe is me! If e'er my hand should wield
 The avenging sword of God, and my vain heart
 Cherish affection to a mortal man!
 'Twere better for me I had ne'er been born!
 Henceforth no more of this, unless ye would
 Provoke the Spirit's wrath who in me dwells!
 The eye of man, regarding me with love,
 To me is horror and profanity.

CHAS. Forbear! It is in vain to urge her further.

JOHAN. Command the trumpets of the war to
 sound!

This stillness doth perplex and harass me;
 An inward impulse drives me from repose,
 It still impels me to achieve my work,
 And sternly beckons me to meet my doom.

SCENE V.

A Knight, entering hastily.

CHAS. What tidings? Speak!

KNIGHT. The foe has crossed the Marne,
 And marshalleth his army for the fight.

JOHAN. (*inspired*) Battle and tumult! Now my
 soul is free.

Arm, warriors, arm! while I prepare the troops.

[*She goes out.*]

CHAS. Follow, La Hire! E'en at the gates of
 Rheims

They will compel us to dispute the crown!

DUNOIS. No genuine courage prompts them. This
 essay
 Is the last effort of enraged despair.

CHAS. I do not urge you, duke. To-day's the time
To compensate the errors of the past.

BURG. You shall be satisfied with me.

CHAS. Myself
Will march before you on the path of fame;
Here, with my royal town of Rheims in view,
I'll fight, and gallantly achieve the crown.
Thy knight, my Agnes, bids thee now farewell!

AGNES. (*embracing him*) I do not weep, I do not
tremble for thee;

My faith, unshaken, cleaveth unto God!
Heaven, were we doom'd to failure, had not given
So many gracious pledges of success!
My heart doth whisper me that, victory-crown'd,
In conquer'd Rheims, I shall embrace my king.

[*Trumpets sound with a spirited tone, and, while
the scene is changing, pass into a wild martial
strain. When the scene opens, the orchestra
joins in, accompanied by warlike instruments
behind the scene.*]

SCENE VI.

*The scene changes to an open country, skirted with trees.
During the music, soldiers are seen retreating hastily
across the background.*

TALBOT, *leaning on* FASTOLFE, *and accompanied by
soldiers. Soon after, LIONEL.*

TALBOT. Here lay me down, beneath these trees,
and then
Betake you back, with speed, unto the fight;
I need no aid to die.

FAST. O woful day! [*LIONEL enters.*]
Behold what sight awaits you, Lionel!

Here lies our general, wounded unto death.

LIONEL. Now, God forbid! My noble lord, arise!
No moment this to falter and to sink.

Yield not to death. By your all-powerful will,
Command your ebbing spirit still to live.

TALBOT. In vain! The day of destiny is come,
Which will o'erthrow the English power in France.
In desperate combat I have vainly risk'd
The remnant of our force to ward it off.
Struck by the thunderbolt I prostrate lie,
Never to rise again. — Rheims now is lost,
Hasten to succour Paris!

LIONEL. Paris is with the dauphin reconcil'd;
A courier even now hath brought the news.

TALBOT. (*tearing off his bandages*) Then freely flow,
ye currents of my blood,
For Talbot now is weary of the sun!

LIONEL. I may no longer tarry: Fastolfe, haste!
Convey our leader to a place of safety.
No longer now can we maintain this post;
Our flying troops disperse on every side,
On, with resistless might, the Maiden comes.

TALBOT. Folly, thou conquerest, and I must yield!
Against stupidity the very gods
Themselves contend in vain. Exalted reason,
Resplendent daughter of the head divine,
Wise foundress of the system of the world,
Guide of the stars, who art thou then, if thou,
Bound to the tail of folly's uncurb'd steed,
Must, vainly shrieking, with the drunken crowd,
Eyes open, plunge down headlong in the abyss.
Accurs'd, who striveth after noble ends,
And with deliberate wisdom forms his plans!
To the fool-king belongs the world —

LIONEL. My lord,
But for a few brief moments can you live —
Think of your Maker!

TALBOT. Had we, like brave men,
 Been vanquished by the brave, we might, indeed,
 Console ourselves that 'twas the common lot;
 For fickle Fortune aye revolves her wheel.
 But to be baffled by such juggling arts!
 Deserv'd our earnest and laborious life
 Not a more earnest issue?

LIONEL. (*extends his hand to him*) Fare you well!
 The debt of honest tears I will discharge
 After the battle — if I then survive.
 Now Fate doth call me hence, where on the field
 Her web she weaveth, and dispenseth doom.
 We in another world shall meet again;
 For our long friendship, this a brief farewell. [*Exit.*]

TALBOT. Soon is the struggle past, and to the earth,
 To the eternal sun, I render back
 These atoms, join'd in me for pain and pleasure.
 And of the mighty Talbot, who the world
 Fill'd with his martial glory, there remains
 Nought save a modicum of senseless dust.
 — Such is the end of man! — the only spoil
 We carry with us from life's battle-field
 Is but an insight into nothingness,
 And utter scorn of all which once appear'd
 To us exalted and desirable. —

SCENE VII.

CHARLES, BURGUNDY, DUNOIS, DU CHÂTEL, and
Soldiers.

BURG. The trench is storm'd!

DUNOIS. The victory is ours!

CHAS. (*perceiving TALBOT*) Look! Who is he, who
 yonder of the sun
 Taketh reluctant, sorrowful farewell?

His armour indicates no common man ;
Go, succour him, if aid may yet avail.

[Soldiers of the KING's retinue step forward.]

FAST. Back ! Stand apart ! Respect the mighty dead,
Whom ye, in life, ne'er ventur'd to approach !

BURG. What do I see, Lord Talbot in his blood !

[He approaches him. TALBOT gazes fixedly at him and dies.]

FAST. Traitor, avaunt ! Let not the sight of thee
Poison the dying hero's parting glance.

DUNOIS. Resistless hero ! Dread-inspiring Talbot !
Does such a narrow space suffice thee now,
And this vast kingdom could not satisfy
The large ambition of thy giant soul !
— Now first I can salute you, Sire, as king :
The diadem but totter'd on your brow,
While yet a spirit tenanted this clay.

CHAS. *(after contemplating the body in silence)* A
higher power hath vanquish'd him, not we !
He lies upon the soil of France, as lies
The hero on the shield he would not quit.
Well, peace be with his ashes ! Bear him hence !

[Soldiers take up the body and carry it away.]
Here, in the heart of France, where his career
Of conquest ended, let his reliques lie !
So far no hostile sword attain'd before.
A fitting tomb shall memorise his name ;
His epitaph the spot whereon he fell.

FAST. *(yielding his sword)* I am your prisoner, sir.

CHAS. *(returning his sword)* Not so ! Rude war
Respects each pious office ; you are free
To render the last honours to the dead.
Go now, Du Chatel, — still my Agnes trembles —
Hasten to snatch her from anxiety —
Bring her the tidings of our victory,
And usher her in triumph into Rheims !

[Exit Du CHATEL.]

SCENE VIII.

The same. LA HIRE.

DUNOIS. La Hire, where is the Maiden?

HIRE. That I ask
Of you; I left her fighting by your side.DUNOIS. I thought she was protected by your arm,
When I departed to assist the king.BURG. Not long ago I saw her banner wave
Amid the thickest of the hostile ranks.DUNOIS. Alas! where is she? Evil I forebode!
Come, let us haste to rescue her. — I fear
Her daring soul hath led her on too far;
Alone, she combats in the midst of foes,
And without succour yieldeth to the crowd.

CHAS. Haste to her rescue!

HIRE. Come!

BURG. We follow all!

[*Exit. They retire in haste.*]*A deserted part of the battle-field. In the distance are
seen the towers of Rheims illumined by the sun.*

SCENE IX.

*A KNIGHT in black armour, with closed visor. JOHANNA
follows him to the front of the stage, where he stops
and awaits her.*JOHAN. Deluder! now I see thy stratagem!
Thou hast deceitfully, through seeming flight,
Allur'd me from the battle, doom and death
Averting thus from many a British head.
Destruction now doth overtake thyself.

KNIGHT. Why dost thou follow after me and track
My steps with quenchless rage? I am not doom'd
To perish by thy hand.

JOHAN. Deep in my soul
I hate thee as the night, which is thy colour
To blot thee out from the fair light of day;
An irresistible desire impels me.
Who art thou? Raise thy visor. — I had said
That thou wert Talbot, had I not myself
Seen warlike Talbot in the battle fall.

KNIGHT. Is the divining Spirit mute in thee?

JOHAN. His voice speaks loudly in my Spirit's
depths

The near approach of woe.

BLACK KNIGHT. Johanna D'Arc!
Borne on the wings of conquest, thou hast reach'd
The gates of Rheims. Let thy achiev'd renown
Content thee. Fortune, like thy slave, till now
Hath follow'd thee; dismiss her, ere in wrath
She free herself; fidelity she hates;
She serveth none with constancy till death.

JOHAN. Why check me in the midst of my career?
Why bid me falter and forsake my work?
I will complete it, and fulfil my vow!

KNIGHT. Nothing can thee, thou mighty one, with-
stand.

In battle thou art aye invincible.

— But henceforth shun the fight; attend my warning!

JOHAN. Not from my hand will I resign this sword
Till haughty England's prostrate in the dust.

KNIGHT. Behold! there Rheims ariseth with its
towers,
The goal and end of thy career. — Thou seest
The lofty minster's sun-illumin'd dome;
Thou in triumphal pomp wouldst enter there,
Thy monarch crown, and ratify thy vow.
— Enter not there! Return! Attend my warning!

JOHAN. What art thou, double-tongu'd, deceitful
being,

Who wouldst bewilder and appal me? Speak!

By what authority dost thou presume

To greet me with fallacious oracles?

[*The BLACK KNIGHT is about to depart, she steps
in his way.*

No, thou shalt speak, or perish by my hand!

[*She endeavours to strike him.*

BLACK KNIGHT. (*touches her with his hand, she
remains motionless*)

Slay what is mortal!

[*Darkness, thunder and lightning. The KNIGHT
sinks into the earth.*

JOHAN. (*stands at first in amazement, but soon
recovers herself*)

'Twas nothing living. 'Twas a base delusion,

An instrument of hell, a juggling fiend,

Uprisen hither from the fiery pool

To shake and terrify my steadfast heart.

Wielding the sword of God, whom should I fear?

I will triumphantly achieve my work.

My courage should not waver, should not fail,

Were hell itself to champion me to fight!

[*She is about to depart.*

SCENE X.

LIONEL, JOHANNA.

LIONEL. Accursed one, prepare thee for the fight!

— Not both of us shall quit this field alive.

Thou hast destroy'd the bravest of our host:

The noble Talbot hath his mighty soul

Breathed forth upon my bosom. — I'll avenge

The hero, or participate his doom.
And wouldst thou know who brings thee glory
now,

Whether he live or die, — I'm Lionel,
The sole survivor of the English chiefs,
And still unconquer'd is this valiant arm.

[He rushes upon her; after a short combat she strikes the sword out of his hand.]

Perfidious fortune!

[He wrestles with her. JOHANNA seizes him by the crest and tears open his helmet; his face is thus exposed; at the same time she draws her sword with her right hand.]

JOHAN. Suffer what thou soughtest!

The Virgin sacrifices thee through me!

[At this moment she gazes in his face. His aspect softens her, she remains motionless and slowly lets her arm sink.]

LIONEL. Why linger, why withhold the stroke of death?

My glory thou hast taken — take my life!

I want no mercy, I am in thy power.

[She makes him a sign with her hand to fly.]

How! shall I fly, and owe my life to thee?

No, I would rather die!

JOHAN. *(with averted face)* I will not know
That ever thou didst owe thy life to me.

LIONEL. I hate alike thee and thy proffer'd gift.

I want no mercy — kill thine enemy,

Who loathes and would have slain thee.

JOHAN. Slay me then,
And fly!

LIONEL. Ha! What is this?

JOHAN. *(hiding her face)* Woe's me!

LIONEL. *(approaching her)* 'Tis said

Thou killest all the English whom thy sword

Subdues in battles — why spare me alone?

JOHAN. (*raises her sword with a rapid movement, as if to strike him, but lets it fall quickly when she gazes on his face*)

O Holy Virgin!

LIONEL. Wherefore namest thou
The Holy Virgin! she knows nought of thee;
Heaven hath no part in thee.

JOHAN. (*in the greatest anxiety*) What have I done!
Alas! I've broke my vow!

[*She wrings her hands in despair.*]

LIONEL. (*looks at her with sympathy and approaches her*) Unhappy maid!

I pity thee! Thy sorrow touches me;
Thou hast shown mercy unto me alone,
My hatred yielded unto sympathy!
— Who art thou, and whence comest thou?

JOHAN. Away!

LIONEL. Thy youth, thy beauty, move my soul to
pity!

Thy look sinks in my heart. I fain would save thee —
How may I do so? tell me. Come! oh come!
Renounce this fearful league — throw down these
arms!

JOHAN. I am unworthy now to carry them!

LIONEL. Then throw them from thee — quick!
come, follow me!

JOHAN. (*with horror*) How! follow thee!

LIONEL. Thou mayst be saved. Oh, come!
I will deliver thee, but linger not.
Strange sorrow for thy sake doth seize my heart,
Unspeakable desire to rescue thee —

[*He seizes her arm.*]

JOHAN. The Bastard comes! 'Tis they! They seek
for me.

If they should find thee —

LIONEL. I'll defend thee, maid!

JOHAN. I die if thou shouldst perish by their hands!

LIONEL. Am I then dear to thee?

JOHAN. Ye heavenly powers!

LIONEL. Shall I again behold thee — hear from thee?

JOHAN. No! never!

LIONEL. Thus this sword I seize, in pledge
That I again behold thee! [*He snatches her sword.*]

JOHAN. Madman, hold!

Thou darest?

LIONEL. Now I yield to force — again
I'll see thee! [*He retires.*]

SCENE XI.

JOHANNA, DUNOIS, LA HIRE.

HIRE. It is she! The Maiden lives!

DUNOIS. Fear not, Johanna! friends are at thy side.

HIRE. Is not that Lionel who yonder flies?

DUNOIS. Let him escape! Maiden, the righteous
cause

Hath triumph'd now. Rheims opens wide its gates;

The joyous crowds pour forth to meet their king. —

HIRE. What ails the Maiden? She grows pale —
she sinks!

[*JOHANNA grows dizzy, and is about to fall.*]

DUNOIS. She's wounded — rend her breastplate —
'tis her arm!

The wound is not severe.

HIRE. Her blood doth flow.

JOHAN. Oh that my life would stream forth with
my blood!

[*She lies senseless in LA HIRE'S arms.*]

ACT IV.

A hall adorned as for a festival ; the columns are hung with garlands ; behind the scene flutes and hautboys.

SCENE I.

JOHAN. Hushed is the din of arms, war's storms
subside,
Glad song and dance succeed the bloody fray,
Through all the streets joy echoes far and wide,
Altar and church are deck'd in rich array,
Triumphal arches rise in vernal pride,
Wreaths round the columns wind their flowery way,
Wide Rheims cannot contain the mighty throng,
Which to the joyous pageant rolls along.

One thought alone doth every heart possess,
One rapt'rous feeling o'er each breast preside,
And those to-day are link'd in happiness
Whom bloody hatred did erewhile divide.
All who themselves of Gallic race confess
The name of Frenchman own with conscious pride,
France sees the splendour of her ancient crown,
And to her monarch's son bows humbly down.

Yet I, the author of this wild delight,
The joy, myself created, cannot share ;
My heart is chang'd, in sad and dreary plight
It flies the festive pageant in despair ;
Still to the British camp it taketh flight,
Against my will my gaze still wanders there,
And from the throng I steal, with grief oppress'd,
To hide the guilt which weighs upon my breast.

What ! I permit a human form
To haunt my bosom's sacred cell ?

And there, where heavenly radiance shone,
 Doth earthly love presume to dwell?
 The saviour of my country, I,
 The warrior of God most high,
 Burn for my country's foeman? Dare I name
 Heaven's holy light, nor feel o'erwhelm'd with shame?
*[The music behind the scene passes into a soft and
 moving melody.]*

Woe is me! Those melting tones!
 They distract my 'wilder'd brain!
 Every note, his voice recalling,
 Conjures up his form again!

Would that spears were whizzing round!
 Would that battle's thunder roar'd!
 'Midst the wild tumultuous sound
 My former strength were then restored.

These sweet tones, these melting voices,
 With seductive powers are fraught!
 They dissolve, in gentle longing,
 Every feeling, every thought,
 Waking tears of plaintive sadness!

[After a pause, with more energy.]

Should I have kill'd him? Could I, when I gazed
 Upon his face? Kill'd him? Oh, rather far
 Would I have turn'd my weapon 'gainst myself!
 And am I culpable because humane?
 Is pity sinful? — Pity! Didst thou hear
 The voice of pity and humanity,
 When others fell the victims of thy sword?
 Why was she silent when the gentle youth
 From Wales entreated thee to spare his life?
 O, cunning heart! Thou liest before high Heaven;

It is not pity's voice impels thee now !
— Why was I doom'd to look into his eyes !
To mark his noble features ! With that glance,
Thy crime, thy woe commenc'd. Unhappy one !
A sightless instrument thy God demands,
Blindly thou must accomplish his behest !
When thou didst see, God's shield abandon'd thee,
And the dire snares of hell around thee press'd !

*[Flutes are again heard, and she subsides into a
quiet melancholy.]*

Harmless staff ! Oh, that I ne'er
Had for the sword abandon'd thee !
Had voices never reached mine ear,
From thy branches, sacred tree !
High Queen of Heaven ! Oh, would that thou
Hadst ne'er reveal'd thyself to me !
Take back — I dare not claim it now —
Take back thy crown, 'tis not for me !

I saw the heavens open wide,
I gazed upon that face of love !
Yet here on earth my hopes abide,
They do not dwell in heaven above !
Why, Holy One, on me impose
This dread vocation ? Could I steel,
And to each soft emotion close,
This heart, by nature form'd to feel ?

Would'st thou proclaim thy high command,
Make choice of those who, free from sin,
In thy eternal mansions stand ;
Send forth thy flaming cherubim !
Immortal ones, thy law they keep,
They do not feel, they do not weep !
Choose not a tender woman's aid,
Not the frail soul of shepherd maid !

Was I concern'd with warlike things,
 With battles or the strife of kings?
 In innocence I led my sheep
 Adown the mountain's silent steep;
 But thou didst send me into life,
 'Midst princely halls and scenes of strife,
 To lose my spirit's tender bloom:
 Alas, I did not seek my doom!

SCENE II.

AGNES SOREL, JOHANNA.

SOREL. (*advances joyfully. When she perceives
 JOHANNA, she hastens to her and falls upon
 her neck; then suddenly recollecting herself,
 she relinquishes her hold, and falls down
 before her*)

No! no! not so! Before thee in the dust —

JOHAN. (*trying to raise her*) Arise! Thou dost forget thyself and me.

SOREL. Forbid me not! 'tis the excess of joy
 Which throws me at thy feet — I must pour forth
 My o'ercharged heart in gratitude to God;
 I worship the Invisible in thee.
 Thou art the angel who hast led my lord
 To Rheims, to crown him with the royal crown.
 What I ne'er dreamed to see, is realised!
 The coronation-march will soon set forth;
 Array'd in festal pomp, the monarch stands;
 Assembled are the nobles of the realm,
 The mighty peers, to bear the insignia;
 To the cathedral rolls the billowy crowd;
 Glad songs resound, the bells unite their peal;
 Oh, this excess of joy I cannot bear!

[JOHANNA gently raises her. AGNES SOREL pauses a moment, and surveys the MAIDEN more narrowly.]

Yet thou remainest ever grave and stern ;
 Thou canst create delight, yet share it not.
 Thy heart is cold, thou feelest not our joy,
 Thou hast beheld the glories of the skies ;
 No earthly interest moveth thy pure breast.

[JOHANNA seizes her hand passionately, but soon lets it fall again.]

Oh, couldst thou own a woman's feeling heart !
 Put off this armour, war is over now,
 Confess thy union with the softer sex !
 My loving heart shrinks timidly from thee,
 While thus thou wearest Pallas' brow severe.

JOHAN. What wouldst thou have me do ?

SOREL.

Unarm thyself !

Put off this coat of mail ! The god of love
 Fears to approach a bosom clad in steel.
 Oh, be a woman, thou wilt feel his power !

JOHAN. What, now unarm myself ? 'Midst battle's
 roar

I'll bare my bosom to the stroke of death !
 Not now ! — Would that a sevenfold wall of brass
 Could hide me from your revels, from myself !

SOREL. Thou'rt loved by Count Dunois. His noble
 heart,

Which virtue and renown alone inspire,
 With pure and holy passion glows for thee.
 Oh, it is sweet to know oneself belov'd
 By such a hero — sweeter still to love him !

[JOHANNA turns away with aversion.]

Thou hatest him ? — no, no, thou only canst
 Not love him : — how could hatred stir thy breast !
 Those who would tear us from the one we love,
 We hate alone ; but none can claim thy love.
 Thy heart is tranquil — if it could but feel —

JOHAN. Oh, pity me! Lament my hapless fate!

SOREL. What can be wanting to complete thy joy?
Thou hast fulfill'd thy promise, France is free,
To Rheims, in triumph, thou hast led the king,
Thy mighty deeds have gain'd thee high renown,
A happy people praise and worship thee;
Thy name, the honour'd theme of every tongue;
Thou art the goddess of this festival;
The monarch, with his crown and regal state,
Shines not with greater majesty than thou!

JOHAN. Oh, could I hide me in the depths of earth!

SOREL. Why this emotion? Whence this strange
distress?

Who may to-day look up without a fear,
If thou dost cast thine eyes upon the ground!
It is for me to blush, me, who near thee
Feel all my littleness; I cannot reach
Thy lofty virtue, thy heroic strength!
For — all my weakness shall I own to thee?
Not the renown of France, my fatherland,
Not the new splendour of the monarch's crown,
Not the triumphant gladness of the crowds,
Engage this woman's heart. One only form
Is in its depths enshrin'd; it hath not room
For any feeling save for one alone:
He is the idol, him the people bless,
Him they extol, for him they strew these flowers,
And he is mine, he is my own true love!

JOHAN. Oh, thou art happy! thou art bless'd
indeed!

Thou lovest where all love. Thou mayst, unblamed,
Pour forth thy rapture, and thine inmost heart
Fearless discover to the gaze of man!
Thy country's triumph is thy lover's too.
The vast, innumerable multitudes,
Who, rolling onward, crowd within these walls,
Participate thy joy, they hallow it;

Thee they salute, for thee they twine the wreath,
 Thou art a portion of the general joy ;
 Thou lovest the all-inspiring soul, the sun,
 And what thou seest is thy lover's glory !

SOREL. (*falling on her neck*) Thou dost delight me,
 thou canst read my heart !

I did thee wrong, thou knowest what love is,
 Thou tell'st my feelings with a voice of power.
 My heart forgets its fear and its reserve,
 And seeks confidingly to blend with thine —

JOHAN. (*tearing herself from her with violence*)
 Forsake me ! Turn away ! Do not pollute
 Thyself by longer intercourse with me !
 Be happy ! go — and in the deepest night
 Leave me to hide my infamy, my woe !

SOREL. Thou frighten'st me, I understand thee not,
 I ne'er have understood thee — for from me
 Thy dark mysterious being was still veil'd.
 Who may divine what thus disturbs thy heart,
 Thus terrifies thy pure and sacred soul !

JOHAN. Thou art the pure, the holy one ! Couldst
 thou
 Behold mine inmost heart, thou, shuddering,
 Wouldst fly the traitoress, the enemy !

SCENE III.

DUNOIS, DU CHATEL, and LA HIRE, with the Banner of
 JOHANNA.

DUNOIS. Johanna, thee we seek. All is prepared ;
 The king hath sent us, 'tis his royal will
 That thou before him shouldst thy banner bear ;
 The company of princes thou shalt join,
 And march immediately before the king :
 For he doth not deny it, and the world

Shall witness, Maiden, that to thee alone
He doth ascribe the honour of this day.

HIRE. Here is the banner. Take it, noble Maiden!
Thou'rt stayed for by the princes and the people.

JOHAN. I march before him? I the banner bear?

DUNOIS. Whom else would it become? What other
hand

Is pure enough to bear the sacred ensign!

Amid the battle thou hast waved it oft;

To grace our glad procession bear it now.

[LA HIRE *presents the banner to her, she draws
back, shuddering.*

JOHAN. Away! away!

HIRE. How! Art thou terrified

At thine own banner, Maiden?—look at it!

[*He displays the banner.*

It is the same thou didst in conquest wave.

Imaged upon it is the Queen of Heaven,

Floating in glory o'er this earthly ball;

For so the Holy Mother show'd it thee.

JOHAN. (*gazing upon it with horror*) 'Tis she her-
self! so she appear'd to me.

See, how she looks at me and knits her brow,

And anger flashes from her threatening eye!

SOREL. Alas, she raveth! Maiden, be composed!

Collect thyself! Thou seest nothing real!

That is her pictured image; she herself

Wanders above, amid the angelic quire!

JOHAN. Thou comest, fearful one, to punish me?

Destroy, o'erwhelm, thine arrowy lightnings hurl,

And let them fall upon my guilty head.

Alas, my vow I've broken! I've profaned

And desecrated thy most holy name!

DUNOIS. Woe's us! What may this mean? What
unblest words?

HIRE. (*in astonishment, to DU CHATEL*) This strange
emotion canst thou comprehend?

DU CHAT. That which I see, I see — I long have
fear'd it.

DUNOIS. What sayest thou?

DU CHAT. I dare not speak my thoughts.
I would to Heaven that the king were crown'd!

HIRE. How! hath the awe this banner doth inspire
Turn'd back upon thyself? before this sign
Let Britons tremble; to the foes of France
'Tis fearful, but to all true citizens
It is auspicious.

JOHAN. Yes, thou sayest truly!
To friends 'tis gracious! but to enemies
It causeth horror! [*The Coronation march is heard.*]

DUNOIS. Take thy banner, then!
The march begins — no time is to be lost!
[*They press the banner upon her; she seizes it with
evident emotion, and retires; the others follow.*
[*The scene changes to an open place before the Cathedral.*]

SCENE IV.

*Spectators occupy the background; BERTRAND, CLAUDE
MARIE and ETIENNE come forward; then MARGOT
and LOUISE. The Coronation march is heard in
the distance.*

BERT. Hark to the music! They approach already!
What had we better do? Shall we mount up
Upon the platform, or press through the crowd,
That we may nothing lose of the procession?

ETIEN. It is not to be thought of. All the streets
Are throng'd with horsemen and with carriages.
Beside these houses let us take our stand;
Here we without annoyance may behold
The train as it goes by.

CLAUDE MARIE. Almost it seems
As were the half of France assembled here ;
So mighty is the flood that it hath reached
Even our distant Lotharingian land
And borne us hither !

BERT. Who would sit at home
When great events are stirring in the land !
It hath cost plenty, both of sweat and blood,
Ere the crown rested on its rightful head !
Nor shall our lawful king, to whom we give
The crown, be worse accompanied than he
Whom the Parisians in St. Denis crown'd !
He is no loyal honest-minded man
Who doth absent him from this festival,
And joins not in the cry : " God save the king ! "

SCENE V.

MARGOT and LOUISE join them.

LOUIS. We shall again behold our sister, Margot !
How my heart beats !

MARG. In majesty and pomp
We shall behold her, saying to ourselves :
It is our sister, it is our Johanna !

LOUIS. Till I have seen her, I can scarce believe
That she, whom men the Maid of Orleans name,
The mighty warrior, is indeed Johanna,
Our sister whom we lost ! [*The music draws nearer*

MARG. Thou doubtst still !
Thou wilt thyself behold her !

BERT. See, they come !

SCENE VI.

Musicians, with flutes and hautboys, open the procession. Children follow, dressed in white, with branches in their hands; behind them two heralds. Then a procession of halberdiers, followed by magistrates in their robes. Then two marshals with their staves; the DUKE OF BURGUNDY, bearing the sword; DUNOIS with the sceptre, other nobles with the regalia; others with sacrificial offerings. Behind these KNIGHTS with the ornaments of their order; choristers with incense; two BISHOPS with the ampulla; the ARCHBISHOP with the crucifix. JOHANNA follows, with her banner, she walks with downcast head and wavering steps; her sisters, on beholding her, express their astonishment and joy. Behind her comes the KING under a canopy, supported by four barons; courtiers follow, soldiers conclude the procession; as soon as it has entered the church the music ceases.

SCENE VII.

LOUISON, MARGOT, CLAUDE MARIE, ETIENNE,
BERTRAND.

MARG. Saw you our sister?

CLAUDE MARIE. She in golden armour,
Who with the banner walked before the king?

MARG. It was Johanna. It was she, our sister!

LOUIS. She recognised us not! She did not feel
That we, her sisters, were so near to her.
She look'd upon the ground, and seemed so pale,
And trembled so beneath her banner's weight —
When I beheld her, I could not rejoice.



MARG. So now, arrayed in splendour and in pomp,
I have beheld our sister — Who in dreams
Would ever have imagined or conceiv'd,
When on our native hills she drove the flock,
That we should see her in such majesty?

LOUIS. Our father's dream is realised, that we
In Rheims before our sister should bow down.
That is the church which in his dream he saw,
And each particular is now fulfilled.

But images of woe he also saw!
Alas! I'm griev'd to see her raised so high!

BERT. Why stand we idly here? Let's to the
church
To view the coronation!

MARG. Yes! Perchance
We there may meet our sister; let us go!

LOUIS. We have beheld her. Let us now return
Back to our village.

MARG. How? Ere we with her
Have interchanged a word?

LOUIS. She doth belong
To us no longer: she with princes stands
And monarchs. — Who are we, that we should seek
With foolish vanity to near her state?
She was a stranger, while she dwelt with us!

MARG. Will she despise, and treat us with con-
tempt?

BERT. The king himself is not ashamed of us,
He kindly greets the meanest of the crowd.
How high so ever she may be exalted,
The king is raised still higher!

[*Trumpets and kettle-drums are heard from the church.*]

CLAUDE MARIE. Let's to the church!

[*They hasten to the background, where they are lost among the crowd.*]

SCENE VIII.

THIBAUT *enters, clad in black.* RAIMOND *follows him and tries to hold him back.*

RAIM. Stay, father Thibaut! Do not join the crowds!

Here, at this joyous festival, you meet
None but the happy, whom your grief offends.
Come! Let us quit the town with hasty steps.

THIB. Hast thou beheld my child? My wretched child?

Didst thou observe her?

RAIM. I entreat you, fly!

THIB. Didst mark her tottering and uncertain steps,
Her countenance, so pallid and disturb'd?
She feels her dreadful state; the hour is come
To save my child, and I will not neglect it.

[He is about to retire.]

RAIM. What would you do?

THIB. Surprise her, hurl her down
From her vain happiness, and forcibly
Restore her to the God whom she denies.

RAIM. O do not work the ruin of your child!

THIB. If her soul lives, her mortal part may die.

[JOHANNA rushes out of the church, without her banner. The people press around her, worship her, and kiss her garments. She is detained in the background by the crowd.]

She comes! 'tis she! She rushes from the church;
Her troubled conscience drives her from the fane!
'Tis visibly the judgment of her God!

RAIM. Farewell! Require not my attendance further!

Hopeful I came, and sorrowful depart.

Your daughter once again I have beheld,
And feel again that she is lost to me!

[*He goes out; THIBAUT retires on the opposite side.*]

SCENE IX.

JOHANNA, *People.* *Afterward her Sisters.*

JOHAN. (*she has freed herself from the crowd and comes forward*)

Remain I cannot — spirits chase me forth!
The organ's pealing tones like thunder sound,
The dome's arch'd roof threatens to o'erwhelm me!
I must escape and seek heaven's wide expanse!
I left my banner in the sanctuary,
Never, oh, never, will I touch it more!
It seem'd to me as if I had beheld
My sisters pass before me like a dream.
'Twas only a delusion! — They, alas!
Are far, far distant — inaccessible —
E'en as my childhood, as mine innocence!

MARG. (*stepping forward*) 'Tis she! It is Johanna!

LOUIS. (*hastening toward her*) O my sister!

JOHAN. Then it was no delusion — you are here —
Thee I embrace, Louison! Thee, my Margot!
Here, in this strange and crowded solitude,
I clasp once more my sister's faithful breast!

MARG. She knows us still, she is our own kind sister.

JOHAN. Your love hath led you to me here so far!
So very far! You are not wroth with her
Who left her home without one parting word!

LOUIS. God's unseen providence conducted thee.

MARG. Thy great renown, which agitates the world,

Which makes thy name the theme of every tongue,
 Hath in our quiet village waken'd us,
 And led us hither to this festival.
 To witness all thy glory we are come;
 And we are not alone.

JOHAN. (*quickly*) Our father's here?
 Where is he? Why doth he conceal himself?

MARG. Our father is not with us.

JOHAN. Not with you?
 He will not see me, then! You do not bring
 His blessing for his child?

LOUIS. He knoweth not
 That we are here.

JOHAN. Not know it! Wherefore not?
 You are embarrass'd, and you do not speak:
 You look upon the ground! Where is our father?

MARG. Since thou hast left —

LOUIS. (*making a sign to MARGOT*) Margot!

MARG. Our father hath
 Become dejected.

JOHAN. Ah!

LOUIS. Console thyself!
 Our sire's forboding spirit well thou know'st!
 He will collect himself, and be composed,
 When he shall learn from us that thou art happy.

MARG. And thou art happy? Yes, it must be so,
 For thou art great and honour'd!

JOHAN. I am so,
 Now I again behold you, once again
 Your voices hear, whose fond familiar tones
 Bring to my mind my dear paternal fields.
 When on my native hills I drove my herd,
 Then I was happy as in Paradise —
 I ne'er can be so more, no, never more!

[*She hides her face on LOUISON'S bosom. CLAUDE
 MARIE, ETIENNE, and BERTRAND appear, and
 remain timidly standing in the distance.*]

MARG. Come, Bertrand! Claude Marie! Come,
Etienne!

Our sister is not proud: she is so gentle,
And speaks so kindly, — more so than of yore,
When in our village she abode with us.

[*They draw near, and hold out their hands;
JOHANNA gazes on them fixedly, and appears
amazed.*]

JOHAN. Where am I? Tell me! Was it all a
dream,

A long, long dream? And am I now awake?

Am I away from Domremi? Is't so?

I fell asleep beneath the Druid tree,

And I am now awake; and round me stand

The kind familiar forms? I only dream'd

Of all these battles, kings, and deeds of war, —

They were but shadows which before me pass'd;

For dreams are always vivid 'neath that tree.

How did you come to Rheims? How came I here?

No, I have never quitted Domremi!

Confess it to me, and rejoice my heart.

LOUIS. We are at Rheims. Thou hast not merely
dream'd

Of these great deeds — thou hast achieved them all.

— Come to thyself, Johanna! Look around —

Thy splendid armour feel, of burnish'd gold!

[*JOHANNA lays her hand upon her breast, recollects
herself, and shrinks back.*]

BERT. Out of my hand thou didst receive this helm.

CLAUDE MARIE. No wonder thou shouldst think it
all a dream;

For nothing in a dream could come to pass

More wonderful than what thou hast achieved.

JOHAN. (*quickly*) Come, let us fly! I will return
with you

Back to our village, to our father's bosom.

LOUIS. Oh, come! Return with us!

PEOPLE. Long live the king! Long live King
Charles the good!

KING. From God alone, the highest potentate,
The monarchs of the French receive the crown;
But visibly from his almighty hand
Have we received it. [*Turning to the Maiden.*
Here stands the holy delegate of heaven,
Who hath restored to you your rightful king,
And rent the yoke of foreign tyranny!
Her name shall equal that of holy Denis,
The guardian and protector of this realm;
And to her fame an altar shall be rear'd!

PEOPLE. Hail to the Maiden, the deliverer!

[*Trumpets.*

KING. (*to JOHANNA*) If thou art born of woman,
like ourselves,
Name aught that can augment thy happiness.
But if thy fatherland is there above,
If in this virgin form thou dost conceal
The radiant glory of a heavenly nature,
From our deluded sense remove the veil,
And let us see thee in thy form of light,
As thou art seen in heaven, that in the dust
We may bow down before thee.

[*A general silence; every eye is fixed upon the Maiden.*

JOHAN. (*with a sudden cry*) God! my father!

SCENE XI.

THIBAUT *comes forth from the crowd and stands opposite to her.* Many voices exclaim,

Her father!

THIB. Yes, her miserable father,
Who did beget her, and whom God impels
Now to accuse his daughter.

BURG.

Ha! What's this?

DU CHAT. Now will the fearful truth appear !

THIB. (*to the KING*) Thou think'st
That thou art rescued through the power of God ?
Deluded prince ! Deluded multitude !
Ye have been rescued through the arts of hell.

[*All step back with horror.*]

DUNOIS. Is this man mad ?

THIB. Not I, but thou art mad,
And this wise bishop, and these noble lords,
Who think that through a weak and sinful maid
The God of Heaven would reveal himself.
Come, let us see if to her father's face
She will maintain the specious, juggling arts,
Wherewith she hath deluded king and people.
Now, in the name of the blest Trinity,
Belong'st thou to the pure and holy ones ?

[*A general silence ; all eyes are fixed upon her, she remains motionless.*]

SOREL. God ! she is dumb !

THIB. Before that awful name,
Which even in the depths of hell is fear'd,
She must be silent ! — She a holy one,
By God commission'd ? — On a cursed spot
It was conceived, — beneath the Druid tree,
Where evil spirits have from olden time
Their Sabbath held. — There her immortal soul
She barter'd with the enemy of man
For transient worldly glory. Let her bare
Her arm, and ye will see impress'd thereon
The fatal marks of hell !

BURG. Most horrible !
Yet we must needs believe a father's words,
Who 'gainst his daughter gives his evidence !

DUNOIS. No, no ! the madman cannot be believed,
Who in his child brings shame upon himself !

SOREL. (*to JOHANNA*) Oh, Maiden, speak ! this fatal
silence break !

We firmly trust thee! we believe in thee!
One syllable from thee, one single word,
Shall be sufficient — speak! annihilate
This horrid accusation! — But declare
Thine innocence, and we will all believe thee.

[JOHANNA *remains motionless*; AGNES *steps back with horror*.

HIRE. She's frighten'd. Horror and astonishment
Impede her utterance. — Before a charge
So horrible e'en innocence must tremble.

[*He approaches her*.

Collect thyself, Johanna! innocence
Hath a triumphant look, whose lightning flash
Strikes slander to the earth! In noble wrath
Arise! look up, and punish this base doubt,
An insult to thy holy innocence.

[JOHANNA *remains motionless*; LA HIRE *steps back*; *the excitement increases*.

DUNOIS. Why do the people fear — the princes
tremble?

I'll stake my honour on her innocence!
Here on the ground I throw my knightly gage —
Who now will venture to maintain her guilt?

[*A loud clap of thunder*; *all are horror-struck*.

THIB. Answer, by Him whose thunders roll above!
Give me the lie. Proclaim thine innocence;
Say that the enemy hath not thy heart!

[*Another clap of thunder, louder than the first*; *the people fly on all sides*.

BURG. God guard and save us! What appalling
signs!

DU CHAT. (*to the KING*) Come, come, my king!
forsake this fearful place!

ARCHB. (*to JOHANNA*) I ask thee in God's name.
Art thou thus silent

From consciousness of innocence or guilt?
If in thy favour the dread thunder speaks,

Touch with thy hand this cross and give a sign !

[JOHANNA *remains motionless. More violent peals of thunder. The KING, AGNES SOREL, the ARCHBISHOP, BURGUNDY, LA HIRE, DU CHATEL retire.*

SCENE XII.

DUNOIS, JOHANNA.

DUNOIS. Thou art my wife — I have believed in thee

From the first glance, and I am still unchanged.
In thee I have more faith than in these signs,
Than in the thunder's voice, which speaks above
In noble anger thou art silent thus ;
Envelop'd in thy holy innocence,
Thou scornest to refute so base a charge.
— Still scorn it, Maiden, but confide in me ;
I never doubted of thine innocence.
Speak not one word — only extend thy hand,
In pledge and token that thou wilt confide
In my protection and thine own good cause.

[*He extends his hand to her ; she turns from him with a convulsive motion ; he remains transfixed with horror.*

SCENE XIII.

JOHANNA, DU CHATEL, DUNOIS, *afterward* RAIMOND.

DU CHAT. (*returning*) Johanna D'Arc ! uninjured
from the town

The king permits you to depart. The gates
Stand open to you. Fear no injury, —
You are protected by the royal word.

Come, follow me, Dunois ! — You cannot here
Longer abide with honour. — What an issue !

[*He retires. DUNOIS recovers from his stupor, casts one look upon JOHANNA, and retires. She remains standing for a moment quite alone. At length RAIMOND appears ; he regards her for a time with silent sorrow, and then, approaching, takes her hand.*

RAIM. Embrace this opportunity. The streets
Are empty now. — Your hand ! I will conduct you.

[*On perceiving him, she gives the first sign of consciousness. She gazes on him fixedly, and looks up to heaven ; then, taking his hand, she retires.*

ACT V.

*A wild wood : charcoal-burners' huts in the distance.
It is quite dark ; violent thunder and lightning ;
firing heard at intervals.*

SCENE I.

CHARCOAL-BURNER and his WIFE.

CH. B. This is a fearful storm, the heavens seem
As they would vent themselves in streams of fire ;
So thick the darkness which usurps the day,
That one might see the stars. The angry winds
Bluster and howl like spirits loosed from hell.
The firm earth trembles, and the aged elms,
Groaning, bow down their venerable tops ;
Yet this terrific tumult, o'er our heads,
Which teacheth gentleness to savage beasts,
So that they seek the shelter of their caves,

Appeaseth not the bloody strife of men —
 Amidst the raging of the wind and storm,
 At intervals is heard the cannon's roar ;
 So near the hostile armaments approach,
 The wood alone doth part them ; any hour
 May see them mingle in the shock of battle.

WIFE. May God protect us then ! — Our enemies,
 Not long ago, were vanquish'd and dispersed.
 How comes it that they trouble us again ?

CH. B. Because they now no longer fear the king.
 Since that the Maid turned out to be a witch,
 At Rheims, the devil aideth us no longer,
 And things have gone against us.

WIFE.

Who comes here ?

SCENE II.

RAIMOND and JOHANNA enter.

RAIM. See ! here are cottages ; in them at least
 We may find shelter from the raging storm.
 You are not able longer to endure it.
 Three days already you have wander'd on,
 Shunning the eye of man — wild herbs and roots
 Your only nourishment. Come, enter in.
 These are kind-hearted cottagers.

[*The storm subsides ; the air grows bright and clear.*]

CH. B. You seem
 To need refreshment and repose — you're welcome
 To what our humble roof can offer you !

WIFE. What has a tender maid to do with arms ?
 Yet truly ! these are rude and troublous times,
 When even women don the coat of mail !
 The queen herself, proud Isabel, 'tis said,
 Appears in armour in the hostile camp ;

And a young maid, a shepherd's lowly daughter,
Has led the armies of our lord the king.

CH. B. What sayest thou? Enter the hut, and
bring
A goblet of refreshment for the damsel.

[*She enters the hut.*]

RAIM. (*to JOHANNA*) All men, you see, are not so
cruel; here
E'en in the wilderness are gentle hearts.
Cheer up! the pelting storm hath spent its rage,
And, beaming peacefully, the sun declines.

CH. B. I fancy, as you travel thus in arms,
You seek the army of the king. — Take heed!
Not far remote the English are encamp'd,
Their troops are roaming idly through the wood.

RAIM. Alas for us! how then can we escape?

CH. B. Stay here till from the town my boy re-
turns,
He shall conduct you safe by secret paths.
You need not fear — we know each hidden way.

RAIM. (*to JOHANNA*) Put off your helmet and your
coat-of-mail,
They will not now protect you, but betray.

[*JOHANNA shakes her head.*]

CH. B. The maid seems very sad — hush! who
comes here?

SCENE III.

CHARCOAL-BURNER'S WIFE *comes out of the hut with a
bowl.* A BOY.

WIFE. It is our boy, whom we expected back.
[*To JOHANNA.*]
Drink, noble maiden! may God bless it to you!

CH. B. (*to his son*) Art come, Anet? What news?

[*The boy looks at JOHANNA, who is just raising the bowl to her lips; he recognises her, steps forward and snatches it from her.*

BOY. O mother! mother!
Whom do you entertain? This is the witch
Of Orleans!

CH. B. (*and his WIFE*) God be gracious to our
souls! [*They cross themselves and fly.*

SCENE IV.

RAIMOND, JOHANNA

JOHAN. (*calmly and gently*) Thou seest, I am follow'd by the curse,
And all fly from me. Do thou leave me too;
Seek safety for thyself.

RAIM. I leave thee! now!
Alas! who then would bear thee company?

JOHAN. I am not unaccompanied. Thou hast
Heard the loud thunder rolling o'er my head;
My destiny conducts me. Do not fear;
Without my seeking I shall reach the goal.

RAIM. And whither wouldst thou go? Here
stand our foes,
Who have against thee bloody vengeance sworn —
There stand our people, who have banish'd thee —

JOHAN. Nought will befall me but what Heaven
ordains.

RAIM. Who will provide thee food? and who protect thee
From savage beasts, and still more savage men?
Who cherish thee in sickness and in grief?

JOHAN. I know all roots and healing herbs; my
sheep

Taught me to know the poisonous from the wholesome;
 I understand the movements of the stars,
 And the clouds' flight; I also hear the sound
 Of hidden springs. Man hath not many wants,
 And nature richly ministers to life.

RAIM. (*seizing her hand*) Wilt thou not look within?

Oh, wilt thou not

Repent thy sin, be reconciled to God,
 And to the bosom of the Church return?

JOHAN. Thou hold'st me guilty of this heavy sin?

RAIM. Needs must I — thou didst silently confess —

JOHAN. Thou, who hast followed me in misery,
 The only being who continued true,
 Who claved to me when all the world forsook,
 Thou also hold'st me for a reprobate,
 Who hath renounced her God —

[*RAIMOND is silent.*]

Oh this is hard!

RAIM. (*in astonishment*) And thou wert really then
 no sorceress?

JOHAN. A sorceress!

RAIM. And all these miracles
 Thou hast accomplish'd through the power of God
 And of his holy saints?

JOHAN. Through whom besides?

RAIM. And thou wert silent to that fearful charge?
 Thou speakest now, and yet before the king,
 When words would have avail'd thee, thou wert dumb!

JOHAN. I silently submitted to the doom
 Which God, my lord and master, o'er me hung.

RAIM. Thou couldst not to thy father aught reply?

JOHAN. Coming from him, methought it came from
 God;

And fatherly the chastisement will prove.

RAIM. The heavens themselves bore witness to thy
 guilt.

JOHAN. The heavens spoke, and therefore I was silent.

RAIM. Thou with one word couldst clear thyself and hast

In this unhappy error left the world ?

JOHAN. It was no error — 'twas the will of Heaven.

RAIM. Thou innocently sufferedst this shame,
And no complaint proceeded from thy lips !
I am amazed at thee, I stand o'erwhelm'd.
My heart is troubled in its inmost depths,
Most gladly I receive the word as truth,
For to believe thy guilt was hard indeed.
But could I ever dream a human heart
Would meet in silence such a fearful doom !

JOHAN. Should I deserve to be Heaven's messenger,
Unless the Master's will I blindly honour'd ?
And I am not so wretched as thou thinkest.
I feel privation — this in humble life
Is no misfortune ; I'm a fugitive, —
But in the waste I learned to know myself.
When honour's dazzling radiance round me shone,
There was a painful struggle in my breast ;
I was most wretched, when to all I seem'd
Most worthy to be envied. — Now my mind
Is heal'd once more, and this fierce storm in nature,
Which threaten'd your destruction, was my friend ;
It purified alike the world and me !
I feel an inward peace — and, come what may,
Of no more weakness am I conscious now !

RAIM. Oh, let us hasten ! come, let us proclaim
Thine innocence aloud to all the world !

JOHAN. He who sent this delusion will dispel it !
The fruit of fate falls only when 'tis ripe !
A day is coming that will clear my name,
When those who now condemn and banish me
Will see their error and will weep my doom.

RAIM. And shall I wait in silence, until chance —

JOHAN. (*gently taking his hand*) Thy sense is
 shrouded by an earthly veil,
 And dwelleth only on external things.
 Mine eye hath gazed on the invisible!
 — Without permission from our God no hair
 Falls from the head of man. — Seest thou the sun
 Declining in the west? So certainly
 As morn returneth in her radiant light,
 Infallibly the day of truth shall come!

SCENE V.

QUEEN ISABEL, *with SOLDIERS, appears in the background.*

ISABEL. (*behind the scene*) This is the way toward
 the English camp!

RAIM. Alas! the foe!

[*The soldiers advance, and perceiving JOHANNA
 fall back in terror.*]

ISABEL. What now obstructs the march?

SOL. May God protect us!

ISABEL. Do ye see a spirit?

How! Are ye soldiers? Ye are cowards all!

[*She presses forward, but starts back on beholding
 the Maiden.*]

What do I see!

[*She collects herself quickly and approaches her.*
 Submit thyself! Thou art

My prisoner.

JOHAN. I am.

[*RAIMOND flies in despair.*]

ISABEL. (*to the soldiers*) Lay her in chains!

[*The soldiers timidly approach the Maiden; she
 extends her arms and is chained.*]

Is this the mighty, the terrific one,
 Who chased your warriors like a flock of lambs,
 Who, powerless now, cannot protect herself?

Doth she work miracles with credulous fools,
And lose her influence when she meets a man?

[*To the Maiden.*]

Why didst thou leave the army? Where's Dunois,
Thy knight and thy protector?

JOHAN. I am banished.

[*ISABEL, stepping back astonished.*]

ISABEL. What say'st thou? Thou art banished?
By the dauphin?

JOHAN. Inquire no further! I am in thy power,
Decide my fate.

ISABEL. Banish'd because thou hast
Snatched him from ruin, placed upon his brow
The crown at Rheims, and made him King of France?
Banish'd! Therein I recognise my son!
— Conduct her to the camp, and let the host
Behold the phantom before whom they trembled!
She a magician? Her sole magic lies
In your delusion and your cowardice!
She is a fool who sacrificed herself
To save her king, and reapeth for her pains
A king's reward. — Bear her to Lionel. —
The fortune of the French I send him bound;
I'll follow her anon.

JOHAN. To Lionel?

Slay me at once, ere send me unto him.

ISABEL. (*to the soldiers*) Obey your orders, soldiers!
Bear her hence! [*Exit.*]

SCENE VI.

JOHANNA, SOLDIERS.

JOHAN. (*to the soldiers*) Ye English, suffer not that
I escape
Alive out of your hands! Revenge yourselves!

Unsheathe your weapons, plunge them in my heart,
And drag me lifeless to your general's feet!
Remember, it was I who slew your heroes,
Who never showed compassion, who poured forth
Torrents of English blood, who, from your sons,
Snatched the sweet pleasure of returning home!
Take now a bloody vengeance! Murder me!
I now am in your power; I may perchance
Not always be so weak.

CONDUCTOR OF THE SOLDIERS. Obey the queen!

JOHAN. Must I be yet more wretched than I was!
Unpitying Virgin! Heavy is thy hand!
Hast thou completely thrust me from thy favour?
No God appears, no angel shows himself.
Closed are heaven's portals, miracles have ceased.

[*She follows the soldiers.*]

SCENE VII.

The French Camp.

DUNOIS, *between the* ARCHBISHOP *and* DU CHATEL.

ARCHB. Conquer your sullen indignation, prince!
Return with us! Come back unto your king!
In this emergency abandon not
The general cause, when we are sorely pressed,
And stand in need of your heroic arm.

DUNOIS. Why are ye sorely pressed? Why doth
the foe
Again exalt himself? all was achieved;—
France was triumphant—war was at an end;—
The saviour you have banished; you henceforth
May save yourselves; I'll not again behold
The camp wherein the Maid abideth not.

DU CHAT. Think better of it, prince! Dismiss us
not

With such an answer!

DUNOIS. Silence, Du Chatel!
You're hateful to me; I'll hear naught from you;
You were the first who doubted of her truth.

ARCHB. Who had not wavered on that fatal day,
And been bewildered, when so many signs
Bore evidence against her! We were stunned,
Our hearts were crushed beneath the sudden blow.
— Who in that hour of dread could weigh the proofs?
Our calmer judgment now returns to us,
We see the Maid as when she walked with us,
Nor have we any fault to charge her with.
We are perplexed; — we fear that we have done
A grievous wrong. — The king is penitent,
The duke remorseful, comfortless La Hire,
And every heart doth shroud itself in woe.

DUNOIS. She a deluder? If celestial truth
Would clothe herself in a corporeal form,
She needs must choose the features of the Maiden.
If purity of heart, faith, innocence,
Dwell anywhere on earth, upon her lips
And in her eyes' clear depths, they find their home!

ARCHB. May the Almighty, through a miracle,
Shed light upon this awful mystery,
Which baffles human insight. — Howsoe'er
This sad perplexity may be resolved,
One of two grievous sins we have committed!
Either in fight we have availed ourselves
Of hellish arms, or banished hence a saint!
And both call down upon this wretched land
The vengeance and the punishment of Heaven!

SCENE VIII.

The same, a NOBLEMAN, afterward RAIMOND.

NOBLE. A shepherd youth inquires after your Highness,

He urgently entreats an interview,
He says, he cometh from the Maiden —

DUNOIS. Haste!

Conduct him hither! He doth come from her!

[*The NOBLEMAN opens the door to RAIMOND.*

DUNOIS hastens to meet him.

Where is she? Where's the Maid?

RAIM. Hail! noble prince!

And blessed am I that I find with you
This holy man, the shield of the oppressed,
The father of the poor and destitute!

DUNOIS. Where is the Maiden?

ARCHB. Speak, my son, inform us!

RAIM. She is not, sir, a wicked sorceress!
To God and all his saints I make appeal.
An error blinds the people. You've cast forth
God's messenger, you've banished innocence!

DUNOIS. Where is she?

RAIM. I accompanied her flight
Toward the wood of Ardennes; there she hath
Revealed to me her spirit's inmost depths;
In torture I'll expire, and will resign
My hopes of everlasting happiness,
If she's not guiltless, sir, of every sin!

DUNOIS. The sun in heaven is not more pure than
she!

Where is she? Speak!

RAIM. If God hath turned your hearts,
Oh, hasten, I entreat you — rescue her —
She is a prisoner in the English camp.

DUNOIS. A prisoner say you?

ARCHB. Poor unfortunate!

RAIM. There in the forest, as we sought for shelter,
We were encounter'd by Queen Isabel,
Who seized and sent her to the English host.
O from a cruel death deliver her
Who hath full many a time deliver'd you!

DUNOIS. Sound an alarm! to arms! up! beat the
drums!

Forth to the field! Let France appear in arms!
The crown and the palladium are at stake!
Our honour is in pledge! risk blood and life!
She must be rescued ere the day is done!

[*Exit.*

A watch-tower — an opening above.

SCENE IX.

JOHANNA and LIONEL.

FAST. (*entering hastily*) The people can no longer
be restrain'd;

With fury they demand the Maiden's death.

In vain your opposition. Let her die,

And throw her head down from the battlements!

Her blood alone will satisfy the host.

ISABEL. (*coming in*) With ladders they begin to
scale the walls.

Appease the angry people! Will you wait

Till in blind fury they o'erthrow the tower,

And we beneath its ruins are destroy'd?

Protect her here you cannot. — Give her up!

LIONEL. Let them storm on! In fury let them
rage!

Firm is this castle, and beneath its ruins

I will be buried ere I yield to them.

— Johanna, answer me ! only be mine,
And I will shield thee 'gainst a world in arms.

ISABEL. Are you a man ?

LIONEL. Thy friends have cast thee off ;
To thy ungrateful country thou dost owe
Duty and faith no longer. The false cowards
Who sought thy hand forsake thee in thy need ;
They for thy honour venture not the fight,
But I, against my people and 'gainst thine,
Will be thy champion. — Once thou didst confess
My life was dear to thee : in combat then
I stood before thee as thine enemy, —
Thou hast not now a single friend but me !

JOHAN. Thou art my people's enemy and mine.
Between us there can be no fellowship.
Thee I can never love, but if thy heart
Cherish affection for me, let it bring
A blessing on my people. — Lead thy troops
Far from the borders of my fatherland ;
Give up the keys of all the captured towns,
Restore the booty, set the captives free,
Send hostages the compact to confirm,
And peace I offer thee in my king's name.

ISABEL. Wilt thou, a captive, dictate laws to us ?

JOHAN. It must be done ; 'tis useless to delay.
Never, oh, never, will this land endure
The English yoke ; sooner will France become
A mighty sepulchre for England's hosts.
Fallen in battle are your bravest chiefs.
Think how you may achieve a safe retreat ;
Your fame is forfeited, your power is lost.

ISABEL. Can you endure her raving insolence ?

SCENE X.

A CAPTAIN *enters hastily.*

CAPT. Haste, general! Prepare the host for battle!
The French with flying banners come this way,
Their shining weapons glitter in the vale.

JOHAN. (*with enthusiasm*) My people come this
way! Proud England, now,
Forth in the field! now boldly must you fight!

FAST. Deluded woman, moderate your joy!
You will not see the issue of this day.

JOHAN. My friends will win the fight and I shall
die!

The gallant heroes need my arm no more.

LIONEL. These dastard enemies I scorn! They
have

In twenty battles fled before our arms,
Ere this heroic Maiden fought for them!
All the whole nation I despise, save one,
And this one they have banish'd. — Come, Fastolfe,
We soon will give them such another day
As that of Poitiers, and of Agincourt.
Do you remain within the fortress, queen,
And guard the Maiden till the fight is o'er.
I leave for your protection fifty knights.

FAST. How! general, shall we march against the
foe

And leave this raging fury in our rear?

JOHAN. What! can a fettered woman frighten thee?

LIONEL. Promise, Johanna, not to free thyself!

JOHAN. To free myself is now my only wish.

ISABEL. Bind her with triple chains! I pledge my
life

That she shall not escape.

[*She is bound with heavy chains.*

LIONEL. (*to JOHANNA*) Thou wilt it so!
Thou dost compel us! still it rests with thee!
Renounce the French, — the English banner bear,
And thou art free, and these rude savage men
Who now desire thy blood shall do thy will!

FAST. (*urgently*) Away, away, my general!

JOHAN. Spare thy words!
The French are drawing near. — Defend thyself!

[*Trumpets sound, LIONEL hastens forth.*]

FAST. You know your duty, queen! if Fate declares

Against us, should you see our people fly —

ISABEL. (*showing a dagger*) Fear not! She shall
not live to see our fall.

FAST. (*to JOHANNA*) Thou knowest what awaits
thee, now implore

A blessing on the weapons of thy people! [*Exit.*]

SCENE XI.

ISABEL, JOHANNA, SOLDIERS.

JOHAN. Ay! that I will! no power can hinder me.
Hark to that sound, the war march of my people.
How its triumphant notes inspire my heart!
Ruin to England! victory to France!
Up, valiant countrymen! The Maid is near:
She cannot, as of yore, before you bear
Her banner — she is bound with heavy chains;
But freely from her prison soars her soul,
Upon the pinions of your battle song.

ISABEL. (*to a soldier*) Ascend the watch-tower
which commands the field,
And thence report the progress of the fight.
[*Soldier ascends.*]

JOHAN. Courage, my people! 'Tis the final struggle —

Another victory and the foe lies low!

ISABEL. What seest thou?

SOL. They're already in close fight.

A furious warrior, on a Barbary steed,
In tiger's skin, leads forward the gens d'armes.

JOHAN. That's Count Dunois! on, gallant warrior!
Conquest goes with thee.

SOL. The Burgundian duke
Attacks the bridge.

ISABEL. Would that ten hostile spears
Might his perfidious heart transfix, the traitor!

SOL. Lord Fastolfe gallantly opposes him.
Now they dismount — they combat man to man,
Our people and the troops of Burgundy.

ISABEL. Behold'st thou not the dauphin? Seest
thou not

The royal banner wave?

SOL. A cloud of dust
Shrouds everything. I can distinguish nought.

JOHAN. Had he my eyes, or stood I there aloft,
The smallest speck would not elude my gaze!
The wild fowl I can number on the wing,
And mark the falcon in his towering flight.

SOL. There is a fearful tumult near the trench;
The chiefs, it seems, the nobles, combat there.

ISABEL. Still doth our banner wave?

SOL. It proudly floats.

JOHAN. Could I look through the loopholes of the
wall,

I with my glance the battle would control!

SOL. Alas! What do I see! Our general's
Surrounded by the foe!

ISABEL. (*points the dagger at JOHANNA*) Die,
wretch!

SOL. (*quickly*) He's free!

The gallant Fastolfe in the rear attacks
The enemy — he breaks their serried ranks.

ISABEL. (*withdrawing the dagger*) There spoke thy
angel!

SOL. Victory! They fly!

ISABEL. Who fly?

SOL. The French and the Burgundians fly;
The field is cover'd o'er with fugitives.

JOHAN. My God! Thou wilt not thus abandon me!

SOL. Yonder they lead a sorely wounded knight;
The people rush to aid him — he's a prince.

ISABEL. One of our country, or a son of France?

SOL. They loose his helmet — it is Count Dunois.

JOHAN. (*seizes her fetters with convulsive violence*)
And I am nothing but a fetter'd woman!

SOL. Look yonder! Who the azure mantle wears,
Border'd with gold?

JOHAN. That is my lord, the king.

SOL. His horse is restive, plunges, rears, and
falls —

He struggles hard to extricate himself —

[JOHANNA *accompanies these words with passionate movements.*]

Our troops are pressing on in full career,

They near him, reach him — they surround him now.

JOHAN. Oh, have the heavens above no angels more!

ISABEL. (*laughing scornfully*) Now is the time, de-
liverer — now deliver!

JOHAN. (*throws herself upon her knees and prays
with passionate violence*)

Hear me, O God, in my extremity!

In fervent supplication up to Thee,

Up to thy heaven above, I send my soul.

The fragile texture of a spider's web,

As a ship's cable thou canst render strong;

Easy it is to thine omnipotence

To change these fetters into spiders' webs —

Command it, and these massy chains shall fall,
 And these thick walls be rent. Thou, Lord, of old
 Didst strengthen Samson, when, enchain'd and blind,
 He bore the bitter scorn of his proud foes.
 Trusting in thee, he seized with mighty power
 The pillars of his prison, bow'd himself,
 And overthrew the structure.

SOL. Triumph!

ISABEL. How?

SOL. The king is ta'en!

JOHAN. (*springing up*) Then God be gracious to me!

[*She seizes her chains violently with both hands, and breaks them asunder. At the same moment, rushing upon the nearest soldier, she seizes his sword and hurries out. All gaze after her, transfixed with astonishment.*]

SCENE XII.

The same, without JOHANNA.

ISABEL. (*after a long pause*) How was it? Did I
 dream? Where is she gone?

How did she break these ponderous iron chains?

A world could not have made me credit it,

If I had not beheld it with these eyes.

SOL. (*from the tower*) How? Hath she wings?
 Hath the wind borne her down?

ISABEL. Is she below?

SOL. She strides amidst the fight:
 Her course outspeeds my sight — Now she is here —
 Now there — I see her everywhere at once!
 — She separates the troops — all yield to her;
 The scatter'd French collect — they form anew!
 — Alas! what do I see! Our people cast
 Their weapons to the ground, our banners sink —

ISABEL. What! Will she snatch from us the victory?

SOL. She presses forward, right toward the king.
She reaches him — she bears him from the fight —
Lord Fastolfe falls — the general is ta'en!

ISABEL. I'll hear no more. Come down!

SOL. Fly, queen! you will be taken by surprise.
Arm'd soldiers are advancing tow'rd the tower.

[*He comes down.*]

ISABEL. (*drawing her sword*) Then fight, ye cowards!

SCENE XIII.

LA HIRE, *with soldiers.* At his entrance the people of
the QUEEN lay down their arms.

HIRE. (*approaching her respectfully*) Queen, submit yourself —

Your knights have yielded — to resist is vain!
— Accept my proffer'd services. Command
Where you would be conducted.

ISABEL. Every place
The same, where I encounter not the dauphin.

[*She resigns her sword, and follows him with the soldiers.*]

The scene changes to the battle-field.

SCENE XIV.

Soldiers with flying banners occupy the background. Before them the KING and the DUKE OF BURGUNDY appear, bearing JOHANNA in their arms; she is mortally wounded, and apparently lifeless. They advance slowly to the front of the stage. AGNES SOREL rushes in.

SOREL. *(throwing herself on the bosom of the KING)*
You're free — you live — I have you back again!

KING. Yes, I am free — I am so at this price!

[Pointing to JOHANNA.]

SOREL. Johanna! — God! she's dying!

BURG. She's gone!

An angel passeth hence! See how she lies,
Easy and tranquil, like a sleeping child!
The peace of heaven around her features plays,
The breath of life no longer heaves her breast,
But vital warmth still lingers in her hand.

KING. She's gone! — She never will awaken more,
Her eye will gaze no more on earthly things.
She soars on high, a spirit glorified,
She seeth not our grief, our penitence.

SOREL. Her eyes unclose — she lives!

BURG. *(in astonishment)* Can she return
Back from the grave, triumphant e'en o'er death?
She riseth up! She standeth!

JOHAN. *(standing up, and looking around)* Where
am I?

BURG. With thine own people, Maiden — with thy
friends!

KING. Supported by thy friend, and by thy king.

JOHAN. *(after looking at him fixedly for some time)*
No! I am not a sorceress! Indeed
I am not one.

KING. Thou'rt holy as an angel ;
A cloud of error dimm'd our mental sight.

JOHAN. (*gazing around her with a joyful smile*) And
am I really, then, among my friends,
And am no more rejected and despised ?
They curse me not — kindly they look on me !
— Yes, all around me now seems clear again !
That is my king ! — the banners these of France !
My banner I behold not — where is it ?
Without my banner I dare not appear ;
To me it was confided by my Lord,
And I before his throne must lay it down ;
I there may show it, for I bore it truly.

KING. (*averting his face*) Give her the banner !

[*It is given to her. She stands quite unsupported,
the banner in her hand. The heaven is illu-
minated by a rosy light.*]

JOHAN. See you the rainbow yonder in the air ?
Its golden portals heaven doth wide unfold,
Amid the angel choir she radiant stands,
The eternal Son she claspeth to her breast,
Her arms she stretcheth forth to me in love.
How is it with me ? Light clouds bear me up —
My ponderous mail becomes a winged robe ;
I mount — I fly — back rolls the dwindling earth —
Brief is the sorrow — endless is the joy !

[*Her banner falls, and she sinks lifeless on the
ground. All remain for some time in speech-
less sorrow. Upon a signal from the KING,
all the banners are gently placed over her, so
that she is entirely concealed by them.*]

The Bride of Messina

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

ISABELLA, Princess of Messina.

DON MANUEL, } her Sons.
DON CÆSAR, }

BEATRICE.

DIEGO, an ancient Servant.

MESSENGERS.

THE ELDERS OF MESSINA, mute.

THE CHORUS, consisting of the Followers of the two Princes.

The Bride of Messina

SCENE I.

A spacious hall supported on columns, with entrances on both sides; at the back of the stage a large folding-door leading to a chapel.

DONNA ISABELLA, *in mourning*; the ELDERS OF
MESSINA.

ISAB. Forth from my silent-chamber's deep recesses,
Gray fathers of the state, unwillingly
I come; and, shrinking from your gaze, uplift
The veil that shades my widowed brows:— the light
And glory of my days is fled for ever!
And best in solitude and kindred gloom
To hide these sable weeds, this grief-worn frame,
Beseems the mourner's heart. A mighty voice
Inexorable — duty's stern command,
Calls me to life again. —

Not twice the moon
Has filled her orb, since to the tomb ye bore
My princely spouse, your city's lord, whose arm
Against a world of envious foes around
Hurled fierce defiance! Still his spirit lives
In his heroic sons, their country's pride:—
Ye marked how sweetly from their childhood's bloom
They grew in joyous promise to the years
Of manhood's strength; — yet in their secret hearts,

From some mysterious root accurs'd, upsprung
Unmitigable deadly hate, that spurned
All kindred ties, all youthful fond affections,
Still ripening with their thoughtful age; — not mine
The sweet accord of family bliss; tho' each
Awoke a mother's rapture; each alike
Smiled at my nourishing breast! for me alone
Yet lives one mutual thought, of children's love,
In these tempestuous souls dissevered else
By mortal strife and thirst of fierce revenge.

While yet their father reigned, his stern control
Tamed their hot spirits, and with iron yoke
To awful justice bowed their stubborn will:
Obedient to his voice, to outward seeming
They calmed their wrathful mood, nor in array
Ere met, of hostile arms; — yet unappeased
Sat brooding malice in their bosoms' depths;
They little reck of hidden springs whose power
Can quell the torrent's fury: — Scarce their sire
In death had closed his eyes, when, as the spark
That long in smouldering embers sullen lay,
Shoots forth a towering flame; — so unconfined
Burst the wild storm of brothers' hate, triumphant
O'er nature's holiest bands. Ye saw, my friends,
Your country's bleeding wounds, when princely strife
Woke discord's maddening fires, and ranged her sons
In mutual deadly conflict; — all around
Was heard the clash of arms, the din of carnage,
And e'en these halls were stained with kindred gore.

Torn was the state with civic rage, this heart
With pangs that mothers feel; alas! unmindful
Of aught but public woes, and pitiless,
You sought my widow's chamber — there with taunts
And fierce reproaches for your country's ills,
From that polluted spring of brothers' hate
Derived, invoked a parent's warning voice,
And threatening told of people's discontent

And princes' crimes! "Ill fated land! now wasted
 By thy unnatural sons, ere long the prey
 Of foeman's sword! Oh, haste," you cried, "and end
 This strife! bring peace again, or soon Messina
 Shall bow to other lords." Your stern decree
 Prevailed; this heart, with all a mother's anguish
 O'erlaboured, owned the weight of public cares.
 I flew, and at my children's feet, distracted,
 A suppliant lay; till to my prayers and tears
 The voice of nature answered in their breasts!

Here in the palace of their sires, unarmed,
 In peaceful guise Messina shall behold
 The long inveterate foes; — this is the day!
 E'en now I wait the messenger that brings
 The tidings of my sons' approach: be ready
 To give your princes joyful welcome home
 With reverence such as vassals may beseem.
 Bethink ye to fulfil your subject duties,
 And leave to better wisdom weightier cares.
 Dire was their strife to them, and to the state
 Fruitful of ills; yet, in this happy bond
 Of peace united, know that they are mighty
 To stand against a world in arms, nor less
 Enforce their sovereign will — against yourselves.

*[The ELDERS retire in silence; she beckons to an
 old attendant who remains.]*

ISAB. Diego!

DIEGO. Honoured mistress!

ISAB. Old faithful servant, thou true heart, come
 near me;

Sharer of all a mother's woes, be thine
 The sweet communion of her joys: — my treasure,
 Shrined in thy heart, my dear and holy secret,
 Shall pierce the envious veil, and shine triumphant
 To cheerful day; too long by harsh decrees
 Silent and overpowered, affection yet
 Shall utterance find in nature's tones of rapture!

And this unprisoned heart leap to the embrace
Of all it holds most dear, returned to glad
My desolate halls ; —

So bend thy aged steps
To the old cloistered sanctuary that guards
The darling of my soul, whose innocence
To thy true love — (sweet pledge of happier days !)
Trusting I gave, and asked from fortune's storm
A resting-place and shrine : Oh, in this hour
Of bliss, the dear reward of all thy cares,
Give to my longing arms my child again !

[*Trumpets are heard in the distance.*

Haste ! be thy footsteps winged with joy — I hear
The trumpet's blast, that tells, in warlike accents,
My sons are near : —

[*Exit* DIEGO. *Music is heard in an opposite direction, and becomes gradually louder.*

Messina is awake !

Hark ! how the stream of tongues hoarse murmuring
Rolls on the breeze, — 'tis they ! my mother's heart
Feels their approach, and beats with mighty throes
Responsive to the loud resounding march !
They come ! they come ! my children ! oh, my children !

[*Exit.*

The CHORUS enters.

*It consists of two semichoruses which enter at the same time from opposite sides, and after marching around the stage range themselves in rows, each on the side by which it entered. One semichorus consists of young knights, the other of older ones, each has its peculiar costume and ensigns. When the two choruses stand opposite to each other, the march ceases, and the two leaders speak.*¹

¹ The first Chorus consists of Cajetan, Berengar, Manfred, Tristan, and eight followers of Don Manuel. The second of Boheimund, Roger, Hippolyte, and nine others of the party of Don Cæsar.

First Chorus (CAJETAN).

I greet ye, glittering halls
Of olden time!
Cradle of kings! Hail! lordly roof,
In pillared majesty sublime!
Sheathed be the sword!
In chains before the portal lies
The fiend with tresses snake-entwined,
Fell Discord! — Gently tread the inviolate floor!
Peace to this royal dome!
Thus by the Furies' brood we swore,
And all the dark avenging deities!

Second Chorus (BOHEMUND).

I rage! I burn! and scarce refrain
To lift the glittering steel on high,
For lo! the Gorgon-visaged train
Of the detested foeman nigh: —
Shall I my swelling heart control? —
To parley deign — or still in mortal strife
The tumult of my soul?
Dire Sister, guardian of the spot, to thee
Awe-struck I bend the knee,
Nor dare with arms profane thy deep tranquillity!

First Chorus (CAJETAN).

Welcome the peaceful strain!
Together we adore the guardian power
Of these august abodes! —
Sacred the hour
To kindred brotherly ties
And reverend holy sympathies; —
Our hearts the genial charm shall own,
And melt awhile at friendship's soothing tone: —
But when in yonder plain

We meet — then peace away !
Come gleaming arms, and battle's deadly fray !

The whole Chorus.

But when in yonder plain
We meet — then peace away !
Come gleaming arms, and battle's deadly fray !

First Chorus (BERENGAR).

I hate thee not — nor call thee foe,
My brother ! this our native earth,
The land that gave our fathers birth : —
Of chief's behest the slave decreed.
The vassal draws the sword at need,
For chieftain's rage we strike the blow,
For stranger lords our kindred blood must flow.

Second Chorus (BOHEMUND).

Hate fires their souls — we ask not why ; —
At honour's call to fight and die,
Boast of the true and brave !
Unworthy of a soldier's name
Who burns not for his chieftain's fame !

The whole Chorus.

Unworthy of a soldier's name
Who burns not for his chieftain's fame !

One of the Chorus (BERENGAR).

Thus spoke within my bosom's core
The thought — as hitherward I strayed ;
And pensive 'mid the waving store,
I mused, of autumn's yellow glade : —
These gifts of nature's bounteous reign,
The teeming earth, and golden grain,

Yon elms, among whose leaves entwine
 The tendrils of the clustering vine ; —
 Gay children of our sunny clime, —
 Region of spring's eternal prime ! —
 Each charm should woo to love and joy,
 No cares the dream of bliss annoy,
 And pleasure through life's summer day
 Speed every laughing hour away.
 We rage in blood, — O dire disgrace !
 For this usurping, alien race ;
 From some far distant land they came,
 Beyond the sun's departing flame.
 And owned upon our friendly shore
 The welcome of our sires of yore.
 Alas ! their sons in thralldom pine,
 The vassals of this stranger line.

A second (MANFRED).

Yes ! pleased, on our land, from his azure way
 The sun ever smiles with unclouded ray.
 But never, fair isle, shall thy sons repose
 'Mid the sweets which the faithless waves enclose.
 On their bosom they wafted the corsair bold,
 With his dreaded barks to our coast of old.
 For thee was thy dower of beauty vain,
 'Twas the treasure that lured the spoiler's train.
 Oh, ne'er from these smiling vales shall rise
 A sword for our vanquished liberties ;
 'Tis not where the laughing Ceres reigns,
 And the jocund lord of the flowery plains : —
 Where the iron lies hid in the mountain cave,
 Is the cradle of empire — the home of the brave !

[*The folding-doors at the back of the stage are thrown open. DONNA ISABELLA appears between her sons, DON MANUEL and DON CÆSAR.*

Both Choruses (CAJETAN).

Lift high the notes of praise !

Behold ! where like the awakening sun,
She comes, and from her queenly brow
Shoots glad-inspiring rays.

Mistress we bend to thee !

First Chorus.

Fair is the moon amid the starry quire
That twinkle o'er the sky,
Shining in silvery mild tranquillity ; —
The mother with her sons more fair !
See ! blooming at her side,
She leads the youthful royal pair ;
With gentle grace, and soft maternal pride
Attempering sweet their manly fire.

Second Chorus (BERENGAR).

From this fair stem a beauteous tree
With ever springing boughs shall smile,
And with immortal verdure shade our isle.
Mother of heroes, joy to thee !
Triumphant as the sun thy kingly race
Shall spread from clime to clime,
And give a deathless name to rolling time !

ISAB. (*comes forward with her SONS*) Look down !
benignant Queen of Heaven, and still
This proud tumultuous heart, that in my breast
Swells with a mother's tide of ecstasy,
As blazoned in these noble youths, my image
More perfect shows ; — O blissful hour ! the first
That comprehends the fulness of my joy,
When long constrained affection dares to pour
In unison of transport from my heart,
Unchecked, a parent's undivided love :

Oh! it was ever one — my sons were twain.
 Say — shall I revel in the dream of bliss,
 And give my soul to nature's dear emotions?
 Is this warm pressure of thy brother's hand
 A dagger in thy breast? . . . [To DON MANUEL
 Or when my eyes
 Feed on that brow with love's enraptured gaze,
 Is it a wrong to thee? [To DON CÆSAR.

Trembling, I pause,
 Lest e'en affection's breath should wake the fires
 Of slumbering hate.
 [After regarding both with inquiring looks.

Speak! In your secret hearts
 What purpose dwells? Is it the ancient feud
 Unreconciled, that in your father's halls
 A moment stilled; beyond the castle gates,
 Where sits infuriate War, and champs the bit —
 Shall rage anew in mortal bloody conflict?

Chorus (BOHEMUND).

Concord or strife — the Fates' decree
 Is bosomed yet in dark futurity! —
 What comes, we little heed to know.
 Prepared for aught the hour may show!

ISAB. (*looking around*) What mean these arms?
 this warlike dread array,
 That in the palace of your sires portends
 Some fearful issue? needs a mother's heart,
 Outpoured, this rugged witness of her joys?
 Say, in these folding arms shall treason hide
 The deadly snare? — O these rude pitiless men,
 The ministers of your wrath! — trust not the show
 Of seeming friendship; treachery in their breasts
 Lurks to betray, and long-dissembled hate.
 Ye are a race of other lands; your sires

Profaned their soil ; and ne'er the invader's yoke
 Was easy — never in the vassal's heart
 Languished the hope of sweet revenge ; — our sway,
 Not rooted in a people's love, but owns
 Allegiance from their fears ; with secret joy —
 For conquest's ruthless sword, and thralldom's chains
 From age to age, they wait the atoning hour
 Of princes' downfall ; — thus their bards awake
 The patriot strain, and thus from sire to son
 Rehearsed, the old traditionary tale
 Beguiles the winter's night. False is the world,
 My sons, and light are all the specious ties
 By fancy twined : Friendship — deceitful name —
 Its gaudy flowers but deck our summer fortune,
 To wither at the first rude breath of autumn !
 So happy to whom Heaven has given a brother ;
 The friend by nature signed — the true and steadfast !
 Nature alone is honest — Nature only —
 When all we trusted strews the wintry shore —
 On her eternal anchor lies at rest,
 Nor heeds the tempest's rage.

DON M. My mother !

DON C. Hear me !

ISAB. (*taking their hands*) Be noble, and forget the
 fancied wrongs

Of boyhood's age : more godlike is forgiveness
 Than victory, and in your father's grave
 Should sleep the ancient hate : — Oh, give your days
 Renewed henceforth to peace and holy love !

[*She recedes one or two steps, as if to give them
 space to approach each other. Both fix their
 eyes on the ground without regarding one
 another.*]

ISAB. (*after waiting for some time, with suppressed
 emotion, a demonstration on the part of
 her sons*)

I can no more ; my prayers — my tears are vain : —

'Tis well! obey the demon in your hearts!
 Fulfil your dread intent, and stain with blood
 The holy altars of our household gods;—
 These halls, that gave you birth, the stage where
 Murder

Shall hold his festival of mutual carnage
 Beneath a mother's eye!— then, foot to foot,
 Close, like the Theban pair, with maddening gripe,
 And fold each other in a last embrace!
 Each press with vengeful thrust the dagger home,
 And "Victory!" be your shriek of death:— Nor then
 Shall discord rest appeased; the very flame
 That lights your funeral pyre shall tower dissevered
 In ruddy columns to the skies, and tell
 With horrid image—"thus they lived and died!"

[She goes away; the Brothers stand as before.]

Chorus (CAJETAN).

How have her words with soft control
 Resistless calmed the tempest of my soul!

No guilt of kindred blood be mine!
 Thus with uplifted hands I pray;
 Think, brothers, on the awful day,
 And tremble at the wrath divine!

DON C. (*without taking his eyes from the ground*)
 Thou art my elder— speak— without dishonour
 I yield to thee.

DON M. One gracious word, and instant,
 My tongue is rival in the strife of love!

DON C. I am the guiltier— weaker—

DON M. Say not so!
 Who doubts thy noble heart knows thee not well;
 Thy words were prouder, if thy soul were mean.

DON C. It burns indignant at the thought of
 wrong;—

But thou -- methinks, in passion's fiercest mood,
'Twas aught but scorn that harboured in thy breast.

DON M. Oh! had I known thy spirit thus to
peace

Inclined, what thousand griefs had never torn
A mother's heart!

DON C. I find thee just and true:
Men spoke thee proud of soul.

DON M. The curse of greatness! —
Ears ever open to the babbler's tale.

DON C. Thou art too proud to meanness — I to
falsehood!

DON M. We were deceived, betrayed!

DON C. The sport of frenzy!

DON M. And said my mother true, false is the
world?

DON C. Believe her, false as air.

DON M. Give me thy hand!

DON C. And thine be ever next my heart!

[*They stand clasping each other's hands, and re-
gard each other in silence.*]

DON M. I gaze
Upon thy brow, and still behold my mother
In some dear lineament.

DON C. Her image looks
From thine, and wondrous in my bosom wakes
Affection's springs.

DON M. And is it thou? — that smile
Benignant on thy face? — thy lips that charm
With gracious sounds of love and dear forgiveness?

DON C. Is this my brother, this the hated foe?
His mien all gentleness and truth — his voice —
Whose soft prevailing accents breathe of friendship!

[*After a pause.*]

DON M. Shall aught divide us?

DON C. We are one for ever!

[*They rush into each other's arms.*]

FIRST CHORUS. (*to the Second*)

Why stand we thus, and coldly gaze,
 While nature's holy transports burn?
 No dear embrace of happier days
 The pledge — that discord never shall return!
 Brothers are they by kindred band;
 We own the ties of home and native land.
 [*Both CHORUSES embrace.*]

A MESSENGER *enters.*

SECOND CHORUS *to* DON C. (BOHEMUND) Rejoice,
 my prince, thy messenger returns: —
 And mark that beaming smile! the harbinger
 Of happy tidings.

MESS. Health to me, and health
 To this delivered state! O sight of bliss,
 That lights mine eyes with rapture! I behold —
 Their hands in sweet accord entwined — the sons
 Of my departed lord — the princely pair
 Dissevered late by conflict's hottest rage.

DON C. Yes! from the flames of hate, a new-born
 phoenix,
 Our love aspires!

MESS. I bring another joy —
 My staff is green with flourishing shoots.

DON C. (*taking him aside*) O, tell me
 Thy gladsome message.

MESS. All is happiness
 On this auspicious day; — long sought, the lost one
 Is found.

DON C. Discovered! Oh, where is she? Speak!

MESS. Within Messina's walls she lies concealed.

DON M. (*turning to the FIRST SEMICHORUS*) A
 ruddy glow mounts in my brother's cheek,
 And pleasure dances in his sparkling eye;
 Whate'er the spring, with sympathy of love

My inmost heart partakes his joy.

DON C. (*to the MESSENGER*) Come, lead me;
Farewell, Don Manuel — to meet again
Enfolded in a mother's arms! I fly
To cares of utmost need. [*He is about to depart.*]

DON M. Make no delay;
And happiness attend thee!

DON C. (*after a pause of reflection he returns*) How
thy looks

Awake my soul to transport! Yes, my brother,
We shall be friends indeed! This hour is bright
With glad presage of ever-springing love,
That in the enlivening beam shall flourish fair,
Sweet recompense of wasted years!

DON M. The blossom
Betokens goodly fruit.

DON C. I tear myself
Reluctant from thy arms, but think not less —
If thus I break this festal hour — my heart
Thrills with a holy joy.

DON M. (*with manifest absence of mind*) Obey the
moment!

Our lives belong to love.

DON C. What calls me hence —

DON M. Enough! thou leav'st thy heart.

DON C. No envious secret
Shall part us long; soon the last darkening fold
Shall vanish from my breast. [*Turning to the CHORUS.*]
Attend! For ever

Stilled is our strife; he is my deadliest foe,
Detested as the gates of hell, who dares
To blow the fires of discord: — none may hope
To win my love, that with malicious tales
Encroach upon a brother's ear, and point,
With busy zeal of false officious friendship,
The dart of some rash angry word, escaped
From passion's heat: — it wounds not from the lips,

But swallowed by suspicion's greedy ear,
Like a rank poisonous weed, embittered creeps,
And hangs about the heart with thousand shoots,
Perplexing nature's ties.

*[He embraces his brother again, and goes away,
accompanied by the SECOND CHORUS.]*

Chorus. (CAJETAN) Wondering, my prince,
I gaze, for in thy looks some mystery
Strange-seeming shows: scarce with abstracted mien
And cold thou answered'st, when with earnest heart
Thy brother poured the strain of dear affection.
As in a dream thou stand'st, and lost in thought
As tho' — dissevered from its earthly frame —
Thy spirit roved afar. Not thine the breast
That, deaf to nature's voice, ne'er owned the throbs
Of kindred love: — nay more — like one entranced
In bliss, thou look'st around, and smiles of rapture
Play on thy cheek.

DON M. How shall my lips declare
The transports of my swelling heart? My brother
Revels in glad surprise, and from his breast,
Instinct with strange new-felt emotions, pours
The tide of joy; but mine — no hate came with me,
Forgot the very spring of mutual strife!
High o'er this earthly sphere, on rapture's wings,
My spirit floats; and in the azure sea,
Above — beneath — no track of envious night
Disturbs the deep serene! I view these halls,
And picture to my thoughts the timid joy
Of my sweet bride, as thro' the palace gates,
In pride of queenly state, I lead her home.
She loved alone the loving one, the stranger,
And little deems that on her beauteous brow
Messina's prince shall 'twine the nuptial wreath.
How sweet, with unexpected pomp of greatness,
To glad the darling of my soul! — too long
I brook this dull delay of crowning bliss!

Her beauty's self, that asks no borrow'd charm,
 Shall shine refulgent, like the diamond's blaze
 That wins new lustre from the circling gold !

Chorus. (CAJETAN) Long have I marked thee,
 prince, with curious eye,

Foreboding of some mystery deep enshrined
 Within thy labouring breast. This day, impatient,
 Thy lips have burst the seal ; and unconstrained
 Confess a lover's joy ; — the gladdening chase,
 The Olympian coursers, and the falcon's flight,
 Can charm no more : — soon as the sun declines
 Beneath the ruddy west, thou hiest thee quick
 To some sequestered path, of mortal eye
 Unseen — not one of all our faithful train
 Companion of thy solitary way.
 Say, why so long concealed the blissful flame ?
 Stranger to fear — ill-brooked thy princely heart
 One thought unuttered.

DON M. Ever on the wing
 Is mortal joy ; — with silence best we guard
 The fickle good ; — but now, so near the goal
 Of all my cherished hopes, I dare to speak.
 To-morrow's sun shall see her mine ! no power
 Of hell can make us twain ! With timid stealth
 No longer will I creep at dusky eve,
 To taste the golden fruits of Cupid's tree,
 And snatch a fearful, fleeting bliss : to-day
 With bright to-morrow shall be one ! So smooth
 As runs the limpid brook, or silvery sand
 That marks the flight of time, our lives shall flow
 In continuity of joy !

Chorus. (CAJETAN) Already
 Our hearts, my prince, with silent vows have blessed
 Thy happy love ; and now from every tongue,
 For her — the royal beauteous bride — should sound
 The glad acclaim ; so tell what nook unseen,
 What deep umbrageous solitude, enshrines

The charmer of thy heart? With magic spells
Almost I deem she mocks our gaze, for oft
In eager chase we scour each rustic path
And forest dell; yet not a trace betrayed
The lover's haunts, ne'er were the footsteps marked
Of this mysterious fair.

DON M. The spell is broke!
And all shall be revealed: now list my tale:—
'Tis five months flown, — my father yet controlled
The land, and bowed our necks with iron sway;
Little I knew but the wild joys of arms,
And mimic warfare of the chase;—

One day, —
Long had we tracked the boar with zealous toil
On yonder woody ridge: — it chanced, pursuing
A snow-white hind, far from your train I roved
Amid the forest maze; — the timid beast,
Along the windings of the narrow vale,
Thro' rocky cleft and thick-entangled brake,
Flew onward, scarce a moment lost, nor distant
Beyond a javelin's throw; nearer I came not,
Nor took an aim; when thro' a garden's gate,
Sudden she vanished: — from my horse quick spring-
ing,

I followed: — lo! the poor scared creature lay
Stretched at the feet of a young beauteous nun,
That strove with fond caress of her fair hands
To still its throbbing heart: wondering, I gazed,
And motionless — my spear, in act to strike,
High poised — while she, with her large piteous eyes
For mercy sued — and thus we stood in silence,
Regarding one another. . . .

How long the pause
I know not — time itself forgot; — it seemed
Eternity of bliss: her glance of sweetness
Flew to my soul; and quick the subtle flame
Pervaded all my heart: —

Chorus. (CAJETAN) But what her royal line?
The noble only spring from noble stem.

DON M. A secret to herself, — she ne'er has learned
Her name or fatherland.

Chorus. (CAJETAN) And not a trace
Guides to her being's undiscovered springs?

DON M. An old domestic, the sole messenger
Sent by her unknown mother, oft bespeaks her
Of kingly race.

Chorus. (CAJETAN) And hast thou won nought else
From garrulous age?

DON M. Too much I feared to peril
My secret bliss!

Chorus. (CAJETAN) What were his words? What
tidings

He bore — perchance thou know'st.

DON M. Oft he has cheered her
With promise of a happier time, when all
Shall be revealed.

Chorus. (CAJETAN) O say — betokens aught
The time is near?

DON M. Not distant far the day
That to the arms of kindred love once more
Shall give the long forsaken, orphaned maid —
Thus with mysterious words the aged man
Has shadowed oft what most I dread — for awe
Of change disturbs the soul supremely blest:
Nay, more; but yesterday his message spoke
The end of all my joys: — this very dawn,
He told, should smile auspicious on her fate,
And light to other scenes: — no precious hour
Delayed my quick resolves — by night I bore her
In secret to Messina.

Chorus. (CAJETAN) Rash the deed
Of sacrilegious spoil! forgive, my prince,
The bold rebuke; thus to unthinking youth
Old age may speak in friendship's warning voice.

DON M. Hard by the convent of the Carmelites,
 In a sequestered garden's tranquil bound,
 And safe from curious eyes, I left her, — hastening
 To meet my brother : trembling there she counts
 The slow-paced hours, nor deems how far triumphant
 In queenly state, high on the throne of Fame
 Messina shall behold my timid bride.
 For next, encompassed by your knightly train,
 With pomp of greatness in the festal show,
 Her lover's form shall meet her wondering gaze !
 Thus will I lead her to my mother ; thus —
 While countless thousands on her passage wait,
 Amid the loud acclaim — the royal bride
 Shall reach my palace gates !

Chorus. (CAJETAN) Command us, prince,
 We live but to obey !

DON M. I tore myself
 Reluctant from her arms ; my every thought
 Shall still be hers : so come along, my friends,
 To where the turbaned merchant spreads his store
 Of fabrics gold enwrought with curious art ;
 And all the gathered wealth of eastern climes.
 First choose the well-formed sandals — meet to guard
 And grace her delicate feet ; then for her robe —
 The tissue, pure as Etna's snow that lies
 Nearest the sun — light as the wreathy mist
 At summer dawn — so playful let it float
 About her airy limbs. A girdle next,
 Purple with gold embroidered o'er, to bind
 With witching grace the tunic that confines
 Her bosom's swelling charms : of silk the mantle,
 Gorgeous with like empurpled hues, and fixed
 With clasp of gold : — remember, too, the bracelets
 To gird her beauteous arms ; nor leave the treasure
 Of ocean's pearly deeps and coral caves.
 About her locks entwine a diadem
 Of purest gems — the ruby's fiery glow

Commingling with the emerald's green. A veil,
 From her tiara pendent to her feet,
 Like a bright fleecy cloud shall circle round
 Her slender form : and let a myrtle wreath
 Crown the enchanting whole !

Chorus. (CAJETAN) We haste, my prince,
 Amid the Bazar's glittering rows, to cull
 Each rich adornment.

DON M. From my stables lead
 A palfrey, milk-white as the steeds that draw
 The chariot of the sun ; purple the housings,
 The bridle sparkling o'er with precious gems,
 For it shall bear my queen ! Yourselves be ready
 With trumpet's cheerful clang, in martial train
 To lead your mistress home : let two attend me,
 The rest await my quick return ; and each
 Guard well my secret purpose.

[He goes away accompanied by two of the Chorus.]

Chorus (CAJETAN).

The princely strife is o'er, and say
 What sport shall wing the slow-paced hours
 And cheat the tedious day ?

With hope and fear's enlivening zest
 Disturb the slumber of the breast,
 And wake life's dull untroubled sea
 With freshening airs of gay variety.

One of the Chorus (MANFRED).

Lovely is Peace ! A beauteous boy,
 Couched listless by the rivulet's glassy tide
 'Mid nature's tranquil scene,
 He views the lambs that skip with innocent joy,
 And crop the meadow's flowering pride : —
 Then with his flute's enchanting sound,
 He wakes the mountain echoes round,

Or slumbers in the sunset's ruddy sheen,
 Lulled by the murmuring melody.
 But War for me! my spirit's treasure,
 Its stern delight, and wilder pleasure:
 I love the peril and the pain,
 And revel in the surge of Fortune's boisterous main!

A second (BERENGAR).

Is there not Love, and beauty's smile
 That lures with soft resistless wile?
 'Tis thrilling hope! 'tis rapturous fear,
 'Tis heaven upon this mortal sphere;
 When at her feet we bend the knee,
 And own the glance of kindred ecstasy!
 For ever on life's chequered way,
 'Tis Love that tints the darkening hues of care
 With soft benignant ray:
 The mirthful daughter of the wave,
 Celestial Venus ever fair,
 Enchants our happy spring with fancy's gleam,
 And wakes the airy forms of passion's golden dream.

First (MANFRED).

To the wild woods away!
 Quick let us follow in the train
 Of her chaste huntress of the silver bow:
 And from the rocks amain
 Track through the forest gloom the bounding roe,
 The war-god's merry bride,
 The chase recalls the battle's fray,
 And kindle's victory's pride:—
 Up with the streaks of early morn,
 We scour with jocund hearts the misty vale,
 Loud echoing to the cheerful horn—
 Over mountain—over dale—
 And every languid sense repair.
 Bathed in the rushing streams of cold reviving air.

Second (BERENGAR).

Or shall we trust the ever-moving sea,
The azure goddess, blithe and free,
Whose face, the mirror of the cloudless sky,
Lures to her bosom wooingly ?
Quick let us build on the dancing waves
A floating castle gay,
And merrily, merrily, swim away !
Who ploughs, with venturous keel, the brine
Of the ocean crystalline —
His bride is Fortune, the world his own,
For him a harvest blooms unsown : —
Here, like the wind that swift careers
The circling bound of earth and sky,
Flits ever changeful Destiny !
Of airy Chance 'tis the sportive reign,
And Hope ever broods on the boundless main !

A third (CAJETAN).

Nor on the watery waste alone
Of the tumultuous heaving sea : —
On the firm earth that sleeps secure,
Based on the pillars of eternity.
Say, when shall mortal joy endure ?
New bodings in my anxious breast,
Waked by this sudden friendship, rise ;
Ne'er would I choose my home of rest
On the stilled lava stream, that cold
Beneath the mountain lies : —
Not thus was Discord's flame controlled —
Too deep the rooted hate — too long
They brooded in their sullen hearts
O'er unforgotten treasured wrong.
In warning visions oft dismayed,
I read the signs of coming woe ;
And now, from this mysterious maid,

My bosom tells the dreaded ills shall flow : —
 Unblest, I deem, the bridal chain
 Shall knit their secret loves, accurst
 With holy cloisters' spoil profane.
 No crooked paths to Virtue lead ;
 Ill fruit has ever sprung from evil seed !

BERENGAR.

And thus to sad unhallowed rites
 Of an ill omened nuptial tie,
 Too well ye know their father bore
 A bride of mournful destiny,
 Torn from his sire, whose awful curse has sped
 Heaven's vengeance on the impious bed !
 This fierce unnatural rage atones
 A parent's crime — decreed by Fate,
 Their mother's offspring, Strife and Hate !

The scene changes to a garden opening on the sea.

BEAT. *(steps forward from an alcove. She walks to and fro with an agitated air, looking around in every direction. Suddenly she stands still and listens)*

No ! 'tis not he : 'twas but the playful wind
 Rustling the pine tops. To his ocean bed
 The sun declines, and with o'erwearied heart
 I count the lagging hours : an icy chill
 Creeps through my frame ; the very solitude
 And awful silence fright my trembling soul !
 Where'er I turn, nought meets my gaze — he leaves me
 Forsaken and alone ! —
 And like a rushing stream the city's hum
 Floats on the breeze, and dull the mighty sea
 Rolls murmuring to the rocks : I shrink to nothing,
 With horrors compassed round ; and like the leaf,

Borne on the autumn blast, am hurried onward
Thro' boundless space. —

Alas! that e'er I left

My peaceful cell — no cares, no fond desires
Disturbed my breast, unruffled as the stream
That glides in sunshine through the verdant mead; —
Nor poor in joys. Now — on the mighty surge
Of Fortune, tempest-tossed — the world enfolds me
With giant arms! Forgot my childhood's ties,
I listened to the lover's flattering tale —
Listened, and trusted! From the sacred dome
Allured — betrayed — for sure some hell-born magic
Enchained my frenzied sense — I fled with him,
The invader of Religion's dread abodes!

Where art thou, my beloved? Haste — return —
With thy dear presence calm my struggling soul!

[She listens.]

Hark! the sweet voice! No! 'twas the echoing surge
That beats upon the shore; — alas! he comes not.
More faintly, o'er the distant waves, the sun
Gleams with expiring ray; a deathlike shudder
Creeps to my heart, and sadder, drearier grows
E'en desolation's self.

[She walks to and fro, then listens again.]

Yes! from the thicket shade

A voice resounds! — 'tis he! — the loved one!
No fond illusion mocks my listening ear:
'Tis louder — nearer: to his arms I fly —
To his breast!

*[She rushes with outstretched arms to the extremity
of the garden. DON CÆSAR meets her.]*

DON CÆSAR. BEATRICE.

BEAT. *(starting back in horror)* What do I see?

[At the same moment the Chorus comes forward.]

DON C. Angelic sweetness! fear not.

[*To the Chorus.*

Retire! your gleaming arms and rude array

Affright the timorous maid.

[*To BEATRICE.*

Fear nothing! — beauty

And virgin shame are sacred in my eyes.

[*The Chorus steps aside. He approaches and takes her hand.*

Where hast thou been? for sure some envious power
Has hid thee from my gaze: long have I sought
thee:

E'en from the hour when, 'mid the funeral rites
Of the dead prince, like some angelic vision,
Lit with celestial brightness, on my sight
Thou shon'st, no other image in my breast,
Waking or dreaming, lives; — nor to thyself
Unknown thy potent spells; my glance of fire,
My faltering accents, and my hand that lay
Trembling in thine, bespoke my ecstasy!
Aught else with solemn majesty the rite
And holy place forbade: —

The bell proclaimed

The awful Sacrifice! With downcast eyes,
And kneeling, I adored: — soon as I rose,
And caught with eager gaze thy form again,
Sudden it vanished; yet, with mighty magic
Of love enchained, my spirit tracked thy presence;
Nor ever, with unwearied quest, I cease,
At palace gates, amid the temple's throng,
In secret paths retired, or public scenes,
Where beauteous innocence perchance might rove,
To mark each passing form — in vain: but, guided
By some propitious deity, this day
One of my train, with happy vigilance,
Espied thee in the neighbouring church.

[*BEATRICE, who had stood trembling, with averted eyes, here makes a gesture of terror.*

I see thee
 Once more ; and may the spirit from this frame
 Be severed e'er we part ! Now let me snatch
 This glad auspicious moment, and defy
 Or chance, or envious demon's power, to shake
 Henceforth my solid bliss ; here I proclaim thee,
 Before this listening warlike train, my bride,
 With pledge of knightly honours !

[He shows her to the Chorus.]

Who thou art,
 I ask not : thou art mine ! But that thy soul
 And birth are pure alike, one glance informed
 My inmost heart ; and though thy lot were mean,
 And poor thy lowly state, yet would I strain thee
 With rapture to my arms : — no choice remains,
 Thou art my love — my wife ! Know too, that
 lifted

On fortune's height, I spurn control ; my will
 Can raise thee to the pinnacle of greatness —
 Enough my name — I am Don Cæsar ! None
 Is nobler in Messina !

*[BEATRICE starts back in amazement. He remarks
 her agitation, and after a pause continues.]*

What a grace
 Lives in thy soft surprise and modest silence !
 Yes ! gentle humbleness is beauty's crown —
 The Beautiful for ever hid, and shrinking
 From its own lustre : but thy spirit needs
 Repose, for aught of strange — e'en sudden joy —
 Is terror-fraught. I leave thee —

[Turning to the Chorus]

From this hour
 She is your mistress, and my bride ; so teach her,
 With honours due, to entertain the pomp
 Of queenly state. I will return with speed,
 And lead her home as fits Messina's princess !

[He goes away.]

*BEATRICE and the Chorus.**Chorus* (BOHEMUND).

Fair maiden — hail to thee,
Thou lovely queen !
Thine is the crown, and thine the victory !
Of heroes, to a distant age,
The blooming mother thou shalt shine,
Preserver of this kingly line.

(ROGER).

And thrice I bid thee hail,
Thou happy fair !
Sent in auspicious hour to bless
This favoured race — the gods' peculiar care.
Here twine the immortal wreaths of Fame,
And evermore, from sire to son,
Rolls on the sceptred sway,
To heirs of old renown, a race of deathless name !

(BOHEMUND).

The household gods exultingly
Thy coming wait ;
The ancient, honoured sires,
That on the portals frown sedate,
Shall smile for thee !
There blooming Hebe shall thy steps attend ;
And golden Victory, that sits
By Jove's eternal throne, with waving plumes
For conquest ever spread,
To welcome thee from heaven descend.

(ROGER).

Ne'er from this queenly bright array
The crown of beauty fades, —

Departing to the realms of day,
Each to the next, as good and fair,
Extends the zone of feminine grace,
And veil of purity:—

O happy race!

What vision glads my raptured eye!
Equal in nature's blooming pride,
I see the mother and the virgin bride.

BEATRICE (*awaking from her reverie*).

O luckless hour!

Alas! ill-fated maid!

Where shall I fly

From these rude warlike men?

Lost and betrayed!

A shudder o'er me came,

When of this race accurst — the brothers twain —

Their hands embru'd with kindred gore,

I heard the dreaded name;

Of told, their strife and serpent hate

With terror thrilled my bosom's core:—

And now — oh, hapless fate!—

I tremble, 'mid the rage of discord thrown,

Deserted and alone! [*She runs into the alcove.*]

Chorus (BOHEMUND).

Son of the immortal deities,

And blest is he, the lord of power;

His every joy the world can give;

Of all that mortals prize

He culls the flower.

(ROGER).

For him from ocean's azure caves

The diver bears each pearl of purest ray;

Whate'er from nature's boundless field
 Or toil or art has won,
 Obsequious at his feet we lay ;
 His choice is ever free ;
 We bow to chance, and Fortune's blind decree.

(BOHEMUND).

But this of princes' lot I deem
 The crowning treasure, joy supreme —
 Of love the triumph and the prize,
 The beauty, star of neighbouring eyes !
 She blooms for him alone,
 He calls the fairest maid his own.

(ROGER).

Armed for the deadly fray,
 The corsair bounds upon the strand,
 And drags, amid the gloom of night, away,
 The shrieking captive train,
 Of wild desires the hapless prey :
 But ne'er his lawless hands profane
 The gem — the peerless flower —
 Whose charms shall deck the sultan's bower.

(BOHEMUND).

Now haste and watch, with curious eye,
 These hallowed precincts round,
 That no presumptuous foot come nigh
 The secret, solitary ground :
 Guard well the maiden fair,
 Your chieftain's brightest jewel owns your care.
 [*The Chorus withdraws to the background.*]

*The scene changes to a chamber in the interior of the
 palace.*

DONNA ISABELLA *between* DON MANUEL *and* DON
CÆSAR.

ISAB. The long-expected festal day is come,
My children's hearts are twined in one, as thus
I fold their hands. Oh, blissful hour! when first
A mother dares to speak in nature's voice,
And no rude presence checks the tide of love.
The clang of arms affrights mine ear no more:—
And as the owls, ill-omened brood of night,
From some old shattered homestead's ruined walls,
Their ancient reign, fly forth a dusky swarm,
Darkening the cheerful day;—when absent long,
The dwellers home return with joyous shouts,
To build the pile anew;—so Hate departs
With all his grisly train—pale Envy, scowling Malice,
And hollow-eyed Suspicion—from our gates,
Hoarse murmuring, to the realms of night; while Peace,
By Concord and fair Friendship led along,
Comes smiling in his place. *[She pauses.*

But not alone
This day of joy to each restores a brother;
It brings a sister! Wonderstruck you gaze!
Yet now the truth, in silence guarded long,
Bursts from my soul—attend! I have a daughter!
A sister lives, ordained by Heaven to bind ye
With ties unknown before.

DON C. We have a sister!
What hast thou said, my mother?—never told
Her being till this hour!

DON M. In childhood's years,
Oft of a sister we have heard, untimely
Snatched in her cradle by remorseless death;
So ran the tale.

ISAB. She lives!

DON C. And thou wert silent!

ISAB. Hear how the seed was sown in early time,

That now shall ripen to a joyful harvest.
Ye bloomed in boyhood's tender age — e'en then —
By mutual deadly hate, the bitter spring
Of grief to this torn anxious heart — dissevered ;
Oh, may your strife return no more ! A vision,
Strange and mysterious, in your father's breast
Woke dire presage : it seemed that from his couch,
With branches intertwined, two laurels grew,
And in the midst a lily all in flames,
That, catching swift the boughs and knotted stems,
Burst forth with crackling rage, and o'er the house
Spread in one mighty sea of fire : perplexed
By this terrific dream, my husband sought
An Arab, skilled to read the stars, and long
The trusted oracle, whose counsels swayed
His inmost purpose : thus the boding sage
Spoke Fate's decrees ; — if I a daughter bore,
Destruction to his sons and all his race
From her should spring. Soon, by Heaven's will, this
child

Of dreadful omen saw the light — your sire
Commanded instant in the waves to throw
The new-born innocent; a mother's love
Prevailed, and, aided by a faithful servant,
I snatched the babe from death.

DON C. Blest be the hands,
The ministers of thy care! O, ever rich
Of counsels was a parent's love!

ISAB. But more
Than Nature's mighty voice — a warning dream
Impelled to save my child: while yet unborn
She slumbered in my womb, sleeping I saw
An infant, fair as of celestial kind,
That played upon the grass; soon from the wood
A lion rushed, and from his gory jaws,
Caressing, in the infant's lap let fall
His prey, new-caught: then thro' the air down swept

An eagle, and with fond caress alike
 Dropt from his claws a trembling kid ; and both
 Cowered at the infant's feet, a gentle pair.
 A monk, the saintly guide whose counsels poured,
 In every earthly need, the balm of Heaven
 Upon my troubled soul, my dream resolved : —
 Thus spoke the man of God : — a daughter, sent
 To knit the warring spirits of my sons
 In bonds of tender love, should recompense
 A mother's pains ! Deep in my heart I treasured
 His words, and, reckless of the pagan seer,
 Preserved the blessed child — ordained of Heaven
 To still your growing strife ; sweet pledge of hope
 And messenger of peace !

DON M. (*embracing his brother*) There needs no
 sister

To join our hearts — she shall but bind them closer.

ISAB. In a lone spot obscure, by stranger hands
 Nurtured, the secret flower has grown — to me
 Denied the joy to mark each infant charm
 And opening grace from that sad hour of parting ; —
 These arms ne'er clasp'd my child again ! — her sire,
 To jealousy's corroding fears a prey,
 And brooding dark suspicion, restless tracked
 Each day my steps.

DON C. Yet three months flown, my father
 Sleeps in the tranquil grave ; say, whence delayed
 The joyous tidings ? — Why so long concealed
 The maid, nor earlier taught our hearts to glow
 With brother's love ?

ISAB. The cause — your frenzied hate.
 That raging unconfined, e'en on the tomb
 Of your scarce buried father, lit the flames
 Of mortal strife. What ! could I throw my daughter
 Betwixt your gleaming blades ? Or 'mid the storm
 Of passion would ye list a woman's counsels ?
 Could she, sweet pledge of peace, of all our hopes

The last and holy anchor, 'mid the rage
 Of discord find a home? Ye stand as brothers.
 So will I give a sister to your arms!
 The reconciling angel comes — each hour
 I wait my messenger's return; he leads her
 From her sequestered cell, to glad once more
 A mother's eyes.

DON M. Nor her alone this day
 Thy arms shall fold:— joy pours thro' all our gates;
 Soon shall the desolate halls be full, the seat
 Of every blooming Grace. — Now hear my secret:
 A sister thou hast given; to thee I bring
 A daughter — bless thy son! My heart has found
 Its lasting shrine: ere this day's sun has set,
 Don Manuel to thy feet shall lead his bride.
 The partner of his days.

ISAB. And to my breast
 With transport will I clasp the chosen maid,
 That makes my first-born happy! Joy shall spring
 Where'er she treads, and every flower that blooms
 Around the path of life smile in her presence!
 May bliss reward the son, that for my brows
 Has twined the choicest wreath a mother wears.

DON C. Yet give not all the fulness of thy blessing
 To him, thy eldest born. If love be blest,
 I, too, can give thee joy — I bring a daughter —
 Another flower for thy most treasured garland!
 The maid that in this ice-cold bosom first
 Awoke the rapturous flame! Ere yonder sun
 Declines — Don Cæsar's bride shall call thee mother!

DON M. Almighty Love! — thou godlike power —
 for well
 We call thee sovereign of the breast! Thy sway
 Controls each warring element, and tunes
 To soft accord; nought lives but owns thy greatness!
 Lo! the rude soul that long defied thee, melts
 At thy command! [*He embraces DON CÆSAR.*]

Now I can trust thy heart,
And joyful strain thee to a brother's arms!
I doubt thy faith no more, for thou canst love!

ISAB. Thrice blest the day, when every gloomy care
From my o'erlaboured breast has flown. I see
On steadfast columns reared our kingly race,
And with contented spirit track the stream
Of measureless time. In these deserted halls,
Sad in my widow's veil, but yesterday
Childless I roamed — and soon, in youthful charms
Arrayed, three blooming daughters at my side
Shall stand! O happiest mother! Chief of women,
In bliss supreme; can aught of earthly joy
O'erbalance thine?

But say, of royal stem,
What maidens grace our isle? For ne'er my sons
Would stoop to meaner brides.

DON M. Seek not to raise
The veil that hides my bliss; another day
Shall tell thee all. Enough — Don Manuel's bride
Is worthy of thy son and thee.

ISAB. Thy sire
Speaks in thy words; thus to himself retired,
For ever would he brood o'er counsels dark,
And cloak his secret purpose; — your delay
Be short, my son. [*Turning to DON CÆSAR.*]

But thou — some royal maid,
Daughter of kings, has stirred thy soul to love;
So speak — her name —

DON C. I have no art to veil
My thoughts with mystery's garb — my spirit free
And open as my brows; what thou wouldst know
Concerned me never. What illumes above
Heaven's flaming orb? Himself! — On all the world
He shines, and with his beaming glory tells
From light he sprung: — in her pure eyes I gazed,
I looked into her heart of hearts: — the brightness

Revealed the pearl. Her race — her name — my
mother,

Ask not of me!

ISAB. My son, explain thy words,
For, like some voice divine, the sudden charm
Has thrall'd thy soul: to deeds of rash emprise
Thy nature prompted, not to fantasies
Of boyish love: — tell me, what sway'd thy choice?

DON C. My choice? my mother! Is it choice
when man

Obeys the might of destiny, that brings
The awful hour? I sought no beauteous bride,
No fond delusion stirred my tranquil breast,
Still as the house of death; for there, unsought,
I found the treasure of my soul. Thou know'st
That, heedless ever of the giddy race,
I looked on beauty's charms with cold disdain,
Nor deemed of womankind there lived another
Like thee — whom my idolatrous fancy deck'd
With heavenly graces: —

'Twas the solemn rite
Of my dead father's obsequies; we stood
Amid the countless throng, with strange attire
Hid from each other's glance; for thus ordained
Thy thoughtful care, lest with outbursting rage,
E'en by the holy place unawed, our strife
Should mar the funeral pomp.

With sable gauze
The nave was all o'erhung; the altar round
Stood twenty giant saints, uplifting each
A torch; and in the midst reposed on high
The coffin, with o'erspreading pall, that showed,
In white, redemption's sign; — thereon were laid
The staff of sovereignty, the princely crown,
The golden spurs of knighthood, and the sword,
With diamond-studded belt: —

And all was hushed

In silent prayer, when from the lofty choir,
 Unseen, the pealing organ spoke, and loud
 From hundred voices burst the choral strain!
 Then, 'mid the tide of song, the coffin sank
 With the descending floor beneath, for ever
 Down to the world below: — but, wide outspread
 Above the yawning grave, the pall upheld
 The gauds of earthly state, nor with the corse
 To darkness fell; yet on the seraph wings
 Of Harmony, the enfranchised spirit soared
 To heaven and mercy's throne:

Thus to thy thought,

My mother, I have waked the scene anew,
 And say if aught of passion in my breast
 Profaned the solemn hour; yet then the beams
 Of mighty love — so willed my guiding star —
 First lit my soul; but how it chanced, myself
 I ask in vain.

ISAB. I would hear all; so end
 Thy tale.

DON C. What brought her to my side, or whence
 She came, I know not: — from her presence quick
 Some secret all-prevading inward charm
 Awoke; 'twas not the magic of a smile,
 Nor playful Cupid in her cheeks, nor more,
 The form of peerless grace; — 'twas Beauty's soul,
 The speaking virtue, modesty inborn,
 That as with magic spells, impalpable
 To sense, my being thrall'd. We breathed together
 The air of heaven: — enough! — no utterance asked
 Of words, our spiritual converse; — in my heart,
 Tho' strange, yet with familiar ties inwrought
 She seemed, and instant spake the thought — 'tis she!
 Or none that lives!

DON M. (*interposing with eagerness*) That is the
 sacred fire
 From heaven! the spark of love — that on the soul

Bursts like the lightning's flash, and mounts in flame,
 When kindred bosoms meet! No choice remains —
 Who shall resist? What mortal break the band
 That Heaven has knit? — Brother, my blissful fortune
 Was echoed in thy tale — well thou hast raised
 The veil that shadows yet my secret love.

ISAB. Thus destiny has marked the wayward
 course

Of my two sons: the mighty torrent sweeps
 Down from the precipice; with rage he wears
 His proper bed, nor heeds the channel traced
 By art and prudent care. So to the powers,
 That darkly sway the fortunes of our house,
 Trembling I yield. One pledge of hope remains;
 Great as their birth — their noble souls.

ISABELLA, DON MANUEL, DON CÆSAR.

DIEGO *is seen at the door.*

ISAB. But see,
 My faithful messenger returns. Come near me,
 Honest Diego. Quick! Where is she? Tell me,
 Where is my child? There is no secret here.
 Oh, speak! No longer from my eyes conceal her;
 Come! we are ready for the height of joy.

[She is about to lead him toward the door.]

What means this pause? Thou lingerest — thou art
 dumb —

Thy looks are terror-fraught — a shudder creeps
 Through all my frame — declare thy tidings! — speak!
 Where is she? Where is Beatrice?

[She is about to rush from the chamber.]

DON M. *(to himself abstractedly)* Beatrice!

DIEGO. *(holding back the PRINCESS)* Be still!

ISAB. Where is she? Anguish tears my breast!

DIEGO. She comes not;
 I bring no daughter to thy arms.

DON C. Yet from the convent's bound
How tear the maid unseen?

DIEGO. 'Tis thought, with ladders,
They scaled the wall.

DON C. Thou know'st what jealous care
Enshrines the bride of Heaven; scarce could their steps
Invade the secret cells.

DIEGO. Bound by no vows,
The maiden roved at will; oft would she seek,
Alone, the garden's shade. Alas! this day,
Ne'er to return.

DON C. Said'st thou — the prize of corsairs? —
Perchance, at other bidding, she forsook
The sheltering dome —

ISAB. (*rising suddenly*) 'Twas force! 'twas savage
spoil!

Ne'er has my child, reckless of honour's ties,
With vile seducer fled! My sons! Awake!
I thought to give a sister to your arms;
I ask a daughter from your swords! Arise!
Avenge this wrong! To arms! Launch every ship!
Scour all our coasts! From sea to sea pursue them!
O bring my daughter — haste!

DON C. Farewell — I fly
To vengeance! [*He goes away.*]

[DON MANUEL *arouses himself from a state of abstraction, and turns, with an air of agitation, to DIEGO.*]

DON M. Speak! within the convent's walls
When first unseen —

DIEGO. This day at dawn.

DON M. (*to ISABELLA*) Her name,
Thou say'st, is Beatrice?

ISAB. No questions! Fly!

DON M. Yet tell me —

ISAB. Haste! Begone! Why this delay? —
Follow thy brother.

DON M. I conjure thee — speak —

ISAB. (*dragging him away*) Behold my tears!

DON M. Where was she hid? What region
Concealed my sister?

ISAB. Scarce from curious eyes,
In the deep bosom of the earth more safe
My child had been!

DIEGO. Oh! now a sudden horror
Starts in my breast.

DON M. What gives thee fear?

DIEGO. 'Twas I
That guiltless caused this woe!

ISAB. Unhappy man!
What hast thou done?

DIEGO. To spare thy mother's heart
One anxious pang, my mistress, I concealed
What now my lips shall tell: — 'Twas on the day
When thy dead husband in the silent tomb
Was laid; from every side the unnumbered throng
Pressed eager to the solemn rites; thy daughter —
For e'en amid the cloistered shade was noised
The funeral pomp — urged me, with ceaseless prayers,
To lead her to the festival of Death.
In evil hour I gave consent; and, shrouded
In sable weeds of mourning, she surveyed
Her father's obsequies. With keen reproach
My bosom tells — (for through the veil her charms
Resistless shone) — 'twas there, perchance, the spoiler
Lurked to betray.

DON M. (*to himself*) Thrice happy words! I live!
It was another!

ISAB. (*to DIEGO*) Faithless! Ill betide
Thy treacherous age!

DIEGO. Oh, never have I strayed
From duty's path! My mistress, in her prayers
I heard the voice of Nature; — thus from Heaven
Ordained, methought, the secret impulse moves

Of kindred blood, to hallow with her tears
 A father's grave: the tender office owned
 Thy servant's care, and thus with good intent
 I wrought but ill.

DON M. (*to himself*) Why stand I thus, a prey
 To torturing fears! No longer will I bear
 The dread suspense — I will know all!

DON C. (*who returns*) Forgive me,
 I follow thee.

DON M. Away! Let no man follow! [*Exit.*]

DON C. (*looking after him in surprise*) What means
 my brother? Speak —

ISAB. In wonder lost
 I gaze; some mystery lurks —

DON C. Thou mark'st, my mother,
 My quick return: with eager zeal I flew
 At thy command, nor asked one trace to guide
 My footsteps to thy daughter. Whence was torn
 Thy treasure? Say, what cloistered solitude
 Enshrined the beauteous maid?

ISAB. 'Tis consecrate
 To St. Cecilia; deep in forest shades,
 Beyond the woody ridge that slowly climbs
 Toward Etna's towering throne, it seems a refuge
 Of parted souls!

DON C. Have courage, trust thy sons;
 She shall be thine, tho' with unwearied quest
 O'er every land and sea I track her presence
 To earth's extremest bounds: one thought alone
 Disturbs, — in stranger hands my timorous bride
 Waits my return; to thy protecting arms
 I give the pledge of all my joy! She comes;
 Soon on her faithful bosom thou shalt rest,
 In sweet oblivion of thy cares. [*Exit.*]

ISAB. When will the ancient curse be stilled, that
 weighs
 Upon our house? Some mocking demon sports

With every new-formed hope, nor envious leaves
 One hour of joy. So near the haven smiled —
 So smooth the treacherous main — secure I deemed
 My happiness : the storm was lulled ; and bright
 In evening's lustre gleamed the sunny shore :
 Then thro' the placid air the tempest sweeps,
 And bears me to the roaring surge again !

[*She goes into the interior of the palace, followed
 by DIEGO.*

The Scene changes to the Garden.

Both Choruscs, afterward BEATRICE.

*The Chorus of DON MANUEL enters in solemn procession,
 adorned with garlands, and bearing the bridal
 ornaments above mentioned. The Chorus of DON
 CÆSAR opposes their entrance.*

First Chorus. (CAJETAN) Begone !

Second Chorus. (BOHEMUND) Not at thy bidding !

CAJET. Seest thou not

Thy presence irks ?

BOHEM. Thou hast it, then, the longer !

CAJET. My place is here ! What arm repels me ?

BOHEM. Mine !

CAJET. Don Manùel sent me hither.

BOHEM. I obey

My lord, Don Cæsar.

CAJET. To the eldest born

Thy master reverence owes.

BOHEM. The world belongs

To him that wins !

CAJET. Unmannered knave, give place !

BOHEM. Our swords be measured first !

CAJET. I find thee ever

A serpent in my path.

- BOHEM. Where'er I list,
Thus will I meet thee!
- CAJET. Say, why cam'st thou hither
To sp—
- BOHEM. And thou to question and command?
- CAJET. To parley I disdain!
- BOHEM. Too much I grace thee
By words!
- CAJET. Thy hot impetuous youth should bow
To reverend age.
- BOHEM. Elder thou art — not braver.
- BEAT. (*rushing from her place of concealment*) Alas!
What mean these warlike men?
- CAJET. (*to BOHEMUND*) I heed not
Thy threats and lofty mien.
- BOHEM. I serve a master
Better than thine.
- BEAT. Alas! Should he appear!
- CAJET. Thou liest! Don Manuel thousandfold
excels.
- BOHEM. In every strife the wreath of victory decks
Don Cæsar's brows!
- BEAT. Now he will come! Already
The hour is past!
- CAJET. 'Tis peace, or thou shouldst know
My vengeance!
- BOHEM. Fear, not peace, thy arm refrains.
- BEAT. Oh! Were he thousand miles remote!
- CAJET. Thy looks
But move my scorn; the compact I obey.
- BOHEM. The coward's ready shield!
- CAJET. Come on! I follow.
- BOHEM. To arms!
- BEAT. (*in the greatest agitation*) Their falchions
gleam — the strife begins!
- Ye heavenly powers, his steps refrain! Some snare
Throw round his feet, that in this hour of dread

He come not: all ye angels, late implored
 To give him to my arms, reverse my prayers;
 Far, far from hence convey the loved one!

[*She runs into the alcove. At the moment when
 the two Choruses are about to engage, DON
 MANUEL appears.*]

DON MANUEL, *the Chorus.*

DON M. Hold!
 What do I see!

*First Chorus to the Second. (CAJETAN, BERENGAR,
 MANFRED)*

Come on! Come on!

Second Chorus. (BOHEMUND, ROGER, HIPPOLYTE)
 Down with them!

DON M. (*stepping between them with drawn sword*)
 Hold!

CAJET. 'Tis the prince!

BOHEM. Be still!

DON M. I stretch him dead
 Upon this verdant turf, that with one glance
 Of scorn prolongs the strife, or threats his foe!
 Why rage ye thus? What maddening fiend impels
 To blow the flames of ancient hate anew,
 For ever reconciled? Say, who began
 The conflict? — Speak —

First Chorus. (CAJETAN, BERENGAR)

My prince, we stood —

*Second Chorus. (ROGER, BOHEMUND) interrupting
 them. They came —*

DON M. (*to the First Chorus*) Speak thou!

*First Chorus. (CAJETAN) With wreaths adorned, in
 festal train,*

We bore the bridal gifts; no thought of ill
 Disturbed our peaceful way; composed for ever
 With holy pledge of love we deemed your strife,

And trusting came; when here in rude array
Of arms encamped they stood, and loud defied us!

DON M. Slave! Is no refuge safe? Shall discord
thus

Profane the bower of virgin innocence,
The home of sanctity and peace?

[*To the Second Chorus.*

Retire —

Your warlike presence ill beseems; away!

I would be private.

[*They hesitate.*

In your master's name

I give command; our souls are one, our lips

Declare each other's thoughts; begone!

[*To the First Chorus.*

Remain —

And guard the entrance.

BOHEM. So! What next? Our masters
Are reconciled; that's plain; and less he wins
Of thanks than peril, that with busy zeal
In princely quarrel stirs; for when of strife
His Mightiness aweary feels, of guilt
He throws the red-dyed mantle unconcerned
On his poor follower's luckless head, and stands
Arrayed in virtue's robes! So let them end
E'en as they will their brawls, I hold it best
That we obey.

[*Exit Second Chorus. The First withdraws to the
back of the Stage; at the same moment
BEATRICE rushes forward, and throws herself
into DON MANUEL'S arms.*

BEAT. 'Tis thou! Ah! cruel one,
Again I see thee — clasp thee — long appalled,
To thousand ills a prey, trembling I languish
For thy return: no more — in thy loved arms
I am at peace, nor think of dangers past,
Thy breast my shield from every threatening harm.
Quick! Let us fly! They see us not — away!

Nor lose the moment.

Ha! Thy looks affright me!
Thy sullen cold reserve! Thou tear'st thyself
Impatient from my circling arms, I know thee
No more! Is this Don Manuel? My beloved?
My husband?

DON M. Beatrice!

BEAT. No words! The moment
Is precious! Haste.

DON M. Yet tell me —

BEAT. Quick! Away
Ere those fierce men return.

DON M. Be calm, for nought
Shall trouble thee of ill.

BEAT. Oh fly! — alas,
Thou know'st them not!

DON M. Protected by this arm
Canst thou fear aught?

BEAT. Oh! trust me; mighty men
Are here.

DON M. Beloved! mightier none than I!

BEAT. And wouldst thou brave this warlike host
alone?

DON M. Alone! the men thou fear'st —

BEAT. Thou know'st them not,
Nor whom they serve.

DON M. Myself! I am their lord!

BEAT. Thou art — a shudder creeps thro' all my
frame!

DON M. Far other than I seemed; so learn at
last

To know me, Beatrice. Not the poor knight
Am I, the stranger and unknown, that loving
Taught thee to love; but what I am — my race —
My power —

BEAT. And art thou not Don Manuel? Speak —
Who art thou?

- DON M. Chief of all that bear the name,
I am Don Manuel, Prince of Messina!
- BEAT. Art thou Don Manuel, Don Cæsar's brother?
- DON M. Don Cæsar is my brother.
- BEAT. Is thy brother!
- DON M. What means this terror? Know'st thou,
then, Don Cæsar?
- None other of my race?
- BEAT. Art thou Don Manuel,
That with thy brother liv'st in bitter strife
Of long inveterate hate?
- DON M. This very sun
Smiled on our glad accord! Yes, we are brothers!
Brothers in heart!
- BEAT. And reconciled? This day?
- DON M. What stirs this wild disorder? Hast thou
known
Aught but our name? Say, hast thou told me all?
Is there no secret? Hast thou nought concealed?
Nothing disguised?
- BEAT. Thy words are dark; explain,
What shall I tell thee?
- DON M. Of thy mother nought
Hast thou e'er told; who is she? If in words
I paint her, bring her to thy sight—
- BEAT. Thou know'st her!
And thou wert silent!
- DON M. If I know thy mother,
Horrors betide us both!
- BEAT. Oh! she is gracious
As the sun's orient beam! Yes! I behold her;
Fond memory wakes;—and from my bosom's depths
Her godlike presence rises to my view!
I see around her snowy neck descend
The tresses of her raven hair, that shade
The form of sculptured loveliness; I see
The pale, high-thoughted brow; the darkening glance

Of her large lustrous orbs; I hear the tones
Of soul-fraught sweetness!

DON M. 'Tis herself!

BEAT. This day,
Perchance had given me to her arms, and knit
Our souls in everlasting love;—such bliss
I have renounced, yes! I have lost a mother
For thee!

DON M. Console thyself, Messina's princess
Henceforth shall call thee daughter; to her feet
I lead thee; come—she waits.

BEAT. What hast thou said?
Thy mother and Don Cæsar's? Never! never!

DON M. Thou shudderest! Whence this horror?
Hast thou known
My mother? Speak—

BEAT. O grief! O dire misfortune!
Alas! that e'er I live to see this day!

DON M. What troubles thee? Thou know'st me,
thou hast found,
In the poor stranger knight, Messina's prince.

BEAT. Give me the dear unknown again! With him,
On earth's remotest wilds I could be blest!

DON C. (*behind the scene*) Away! What rabble
throng is here?

BEAT. That voice!
Oh heavens! Where shall I fly!

DON M. Know'st thou that voice?
No! thou hast never heard it; to thine ear
'Tis strange—

BEAT. Oh, come—delay not—

DON M. Wherefore fly?
It is my brother's voice! He seeks me—how
He tracked my steps—

BEAT. By all the holy saints!
Brave not his wrath! oh quit this place—avoid him—
Meet not thy brother here!

DON M. My soul! thy fears
 Confound; 'thou hear'st me not; our strife is o'er
 Yes! we are reconciled.

BEAT. Protect me, Heaven,
 In this dread hour.

DON M. A sudden dire presage
 Starts in my breast — I shudder at the thought:
 If it be true! Oh horror! Could she know
 That voice! Wert thou — my tongue denies to utter
 The words of fearful import — Beatrice!
 Say, wert thou present at the funeral rites
 Of my dead sire?

BEAT. Alas!

DON M. Thou wert!

BEAT. Forgive me!

DON M. Unhappy woman! —

BEAT. I was present!

DON M. Horror!

BEAT. Some mighty impulse urged me to the
 scene —

Oh be not angry — to thyself I owned
 The ardent fond desire; with darkening brow
 Thou listenedst to my prayer, and I was silent.
 But what misguiding inauspicious star
 Allured, I know not; from my inmost soul
 The wish, the dear emotion spoke; and vain
 Aught else: — Diego gave consent — oh, pardon me!
 I disobeyed thee.

*[She advances toward him imploringly; at the
 same moment DON CÆSAR enters, accom-
 panied by the whole Chorus.]*

BOTH BROTHERS, BOTH CHORUSES, BEATRICE.

Second Chorus (BOHEMUND) to DON CÆSAR.

Thou believ'st us not —
 Believe thine eyes!

DON C. (*rushes forward furiously, and at the sight of his brother starts back with horror*).

Some hell-born magic cheats
My senses; in her arms! Envenomed snake!
Is this thy love? For this thy treacherous heart
Could lure with guise of friendship! O from heaven
Breathed my immortal hate! Down, down to hell,
Thou soul of falsehood!

[*He stabs him, DON MANUEL falls.*

DON M. Beatrice! — my brother! —
I die! [*Dies. BEATRICE sinks lifeless at his side.*

First Chorus. (CAJETAN)
Help! Help! To arms! Avenge with blood
The bloody deed!

Second Chorus. (BOHEMUND) The fortune of the day
Is ours! The strife for ever stilled: — Messina
Obeys one lord.

First Chorus. (CAJETAN, BERENGAR, MANFRED)
Revenge! The murderer
Shall die! Quick offer to your master's shade
Appeasing sacrifice!

Second Chorus. (BOHEMUND, ROGER, HIPPOLYTE)
My prince! fear nothing,

Thy friends are true.

DON C. (*steps between them, looking around*) Be
still! The foe is slain

That practised on my trusting honest heart
With snares of brother's love! O direful shows
The deed of death! But righteous Heaven hath judged.

First Chorus. (CAJETAN) Alas to thee, Messina!
Woe for ever!

Sad city! From thy blood-stained walls this deed
Of nameless horror taints the skies: ill fare
Thy mothers and thy children, youth and age,
And offspring yet unborn!

DON C. Too late your grief —
Here give your help. [*Pointing to BEATRICE.*

Call her to life, and quick
 Depart this scene of terror and of death.
 I must away and seek my sister: — Hence!
 Conduct her to my mother —
 And tell her that her son, Don Cæsar, sends her!

[*Exit.*

[*The senseless BEATRICE is placed on a litter and carried away by the Second Chorus. The First Chorus remains with the body, around which the boys who bear the bridal presents range themselves in a semicircle.*

Chorus (CAJETAN).

List, how with dreaded mystery
 Was signed to my prophetic soul,
 Of kindred blood the dire decree: —
 Hither with noiseless giant stride
 I saw the hideous Fiend of terror glide:
 'Tis past! — I strive not to control
 My shuddering awe — so swift of ill
 The Fates the warning sign fulfil.
 Lo! to my sense dismayed,
 Sudden the deed of death has shown
 Whate'er my boding fears portrayed:
 The visioned thought was pain;
 The present horror curdles every vein!

One of the Chorus (MANFRED).

Sound, sound the plaint of woe!
 Beautiful Youth!
 Outstretched and pale he lies,
 Untimely cropped in early bloom;
 The heavy night of death has sealed his eyes; —
 In this glad hour of nuptial joy,
 Snatched by relentless doom,

He sleeps — while, echoing to the sky,
Of sorrow bursts the loud despairing cry!

A second (CAJETAN).

We come, we come, in festal pride,
To greet the beauteous bride;
Behold! the nuptial gifts, the rich attire:
The banquet waits, the guests are there;
They bid thee to the solemn rite
Of Hymen quick repair.
Thou hear'st them not — the sportive lyre,
The frolic dance, shall ne'er invite;
Nor wake thee from thy lowly bed,
For deep the slumber of the dead!

The whole Chorus.

No more the echoing horn shall cheer,
Nor bride with tones of sweetness charm his ear,
On the cold earth he lies,
In death's eternal slumber closed his eyes.

A third (CAJETAN).

What are the hopes, and fond desires
Of mortals' transitory race?
This day, with harmony of voice and soul,
Ye woke the long-extinguished fires
Of brothers' love — yon flaming orb
Lit with his earliest beams your dear embrace:
At eve, upon the gory sand
Thou liest — a reeking corse!
Stretched by a brother's murderous hand.
Vain projects, treacherous hopes,
Child of the fleeting hour, are thine;
Fond man! thou rear'st on dust each bold design

Chorus (BERENGAR).

To thy mother I will bear
 The burden of unutterable woe!
 Quick shall yon cypress, blooming fair,
 Bend to the axe's murderous blow.
 Then twine the mournful bier!
 For ne'er with verdant life the tree shall smile
 That grew on death's devoted soil;
 Ne'er in the breeze the branches play,
 Nor shade the wanderer in the noontide ray;
 'Twas marked to bear the fruits of doom,
 Cursed to the service of the tomb.

First (CAJETAN).

Woe to the murderer! Woe!
 That sped exulting in his pride.
 Behold! the parched earth drinks the crimson tide.
 Down, down it flows, unceasingly,
 To the dim caverned halls below,
 Where throned in kindred gloom the sister train,
 Of Themis progeny severe,
 Brood in their songless silent reign!
 Stern ministers of Wrath's decree,
 They catch in swarthy cups thy streaming gore,
 And pledge with horrid rites for vengeance evermore!

Second (BERENGAR).

Tho' swift of deeds the traces fade
 From earth, before the enlivening ray;
 As o'er the brow the transient shade
 Of thought, the hues of fancy flit away:—
 Yet in the mystic womb unseen,
 Of the dark ruling Hours that sway
 Our mortal lot, whate'er *has been*,
 With new creative germ defies decay.
 The blooming field is time,

For Nature's ever-teeming shoot,
And all is seed, and all is fruit.

[*The Chorus goes away, bearing the corpse of DON MANUEL on a bier.*]

SCENE. — *The Hall of Pillars. It is night.*

The stage is lighted from above by a single large lamp.

DONNA ISABELLA and DIEGO advance to the front.

ISAB. As yet no joyful tidings, not a trace
Found of the lost one!

DIEGO. Nothing have we heard,
My mistress; yet o'er every track, unwearied,
Thy sons pursue. Ere long the rescued maid
Shall smile at dangers past.

ISAB. Alas! Diego,
My heart is sad; 'twas I that caused this woe!

DIEGO. Vex not thy anxious bosom; nought escaped
Thy thoughtful care.

ISAB. Oh! had I earlier shown
The hidden treasure!

DIEGO. Prudent were thy counsels,
Wisely thou left'st her in retirement's shade;
So, trust in Heaven.

ISAB. Alas! no joy is perfect —
Without this chance of ill my bliss were pure.

DIEGO. Thy happiness is but delayed; enjoy
The concord of thy sons.

ISAB. The sight was rapture
Supreme — when, locked in one another's arms,
They glowed with brothers' love.

DIEGO. And in the heart
It burns; for ne'er their princely souls have stooped
To mean disguise.

ISAB. Now, too, their bosoms wake

To gentler thoughts, and own the softening sway
Of love. No more their hot impetuous youth
Revels in liberty untamed, and spurns
Restraint of Law — attemper'd passion's self,
With modest chaste reserve.

To thee, Diego,
I will unfold my secret heart; this hour
Of feeling's opening bloom, expected long,
Wakes boding fears: thou know'st to sudden rage
Love stirs tumultuous breasts; — and if this flame
With jealousy should rouse the slumbering fires
Of ancient hate — I shudder at the thought!
If these discordant souls perchance have thrilled
In fatal unison! — Enough — the clouds,
That black with thundering menace o'er me hung,
Are past; some angel sped them tranquil by,
And my enfranchised spirit breathes again!

DIEGO. Rejoice, my mistress; for thy gentle sense,
And soft prevailing art, more weal have wrought
Than all thy husband's power. Be praise to thee
And thy auspicious star!

ISAB. Yes! fortune smiled;
Nor light the task, so long with apt disguise
To veil the cherished secret of my heart,
And cheat my ever-jealous lord: more hard
To stifle mighty nature's pleading voice,
That, like a prisoned fire, for ever strove
To rend its confines.

DIEGO. All shall yet be well;
Fortune, propitious to our hopes, gave pledge
Of bliss that time will show.

ISAB. I praise not yet
My natal star, while darkening o'er my fate
This mystery hangs: too well the dire mischance
Tells of the Fiend whose never slumbering rage
Pursues our house. Now list what I have done,
And praise or blame me as thou wilt; from thee

My bosom guards no secret : — ill I brook
This dull repose, while swift o'er land and sea
My sons unwearied track their sister's flight,
Yes ! I have sought — Heaven counsels oft, when vain
All mortal aid.

DIEGO. What I may know, my mistress,
Declare.

ISAB. On Etna's solitary height
A reverend hermit dwells ; — benamed of old,
The Mountain Seer ; — who to the realms of light
More near abiding than the toilsome race
Of mortals here below, with purer air
Has cleansed each earthly grosser sense away ;
And from the lofty peak of gathered years,
As from his mountain home, with downward glance
Surveys the crooked paths of worldly strife.
To him are known the fortunes of our house ;
Oft has the holy sage besought response
From Heaven, and many a curse with earnest prayer
Averted : thither at my bidding flew,
On wings of youthful haste, a messenger,
To ask some tidings of my child : each hour
I wait his homeward footsteps.

DIEGO. If mine eyes
Deceive me not, he comes ; and well his speed
Has earned thy praise.

MESSENGER, ISABELLA, DIEGO.

ISAB. (*to MESSENGER*) Now speak, and nothing hide
Of weal or woe : be Truth upon thy lips !
What tidings bear'st thou from the Mountain Seer ?

MESS. His answer, " Quick, retrace thy steps — the
 lost one
Is found."

ISAB. Auspicious tongue ! Celestial sounds
Of peace and joy ! thus ever to my vows,

Thrice honoured sage, thy kindly message spoke !
 But say, which heaven-directed brother traced
 My daughter ?

MESS. 'Twas thy eldest born that found
 The deep-secluded maid.

ISAB. Is it Don Manuel
 That gives her to my arms ? Oh, he was ever
 The child of blessing ! Tell me, hast thou borne
 My offering to the aged man ? — the tapers
 To burn before his saint ? for gifts, the prize
 Of worldly hearts, the man of God disdains.

MESS. He took the torches from my hand, in silence,
 And stepping to the altar — where the lamp
 Burned to his saint — illumed them at its fire,
 And instant set in flames the hermit cell,
 Where he has honoured God these ninety years !

ISAB. What hast thou said ? What horrors fright
 my soul ?

MESS. And three times shrieking "Woe !" with
 downward course,
 He fled ; but silent with uplifted arm
 Beckoned me not to follow, nor regard him !
 So hither I have hastened, terror sped.

ISAB. O, I am tossed amid the surge again
 Of doubt and anxious fears ; thy tale appals
 With ominous sounds of ill. My daughter found —
 Thou say'st ; and by my eldest born, Don Manuel ?
 The tidings ne'er shall bless, that heralded
 This deed of woe !

MESS. My mistress ! look around,
 Behold the hermit's message to thine eyes
 Fulfilled. Some charm deludes my sense, or hither
 Thy daughter comes, girt by the warlike train
 Of thy two sons !

[BEATRICE is carried in by the Second Chorus on
 a litter, and placed in the front of the stage.
 She is still without perception, and motionless.]

ISABELLA, DIEGO, MESSENGER, BEATRICE.

Chorus (BOHEMUND, ROGER, HYPPOLYTE, and the other nine followers of DON CÆSAR).

Chorus. (BOHEMUND) Here at thy feet we lay
The maid, obedient to our lord's command :
'Twas thus he spoke — " Conduct her to my mother ;
And tell her that her son, Don Cæsar, sends her ! "

ISAB. (*is advancing toward her with outstretched arms, and starts back in horror*)

Heavens ! she is motionless and pale !

Chorus. (BOHEMUND) She lives,
She will awake, but give her time to rouse
From the dread shock that holds each sense enthralled.

ISAB. My daughter ! Child of all my cares and pains !

And is it thus I see thee once again ?
Thus thou returnest to thy father's halls !
O let my breath relume thy vital spark ;
Yes ! I will strain thee to a mother's arms
And hold thee fast — till, from the frost of death
Released, thy life-warm current throbs again.

[*To the Chorus.*

Where hast thou found her ? Speak ! What dire
mischance

Has caused this sight of woe ?

Chorus (BOHEMUND) My lips are dumb !
Ask not of me : thy son will tell thee all —
Don Cæsar — for 'tis he that sends her.

ISAB. Tell me,
Would'st thou not say Don Manuel ?

Chorus. (BOHEMUND) 'Tis Don Cæsar
That sends her to thee.

ISAB. (*to the MESSENGER*) How declared the seer ?
Speak ! Was it not Don Manuel ?

MESS. 'Twas he!
Thy elder born.

ISAB. Be blessings on his head
Whiche'er it be; to him I owe a daughter.
Alas! that in this blissful hour, so long
Expected, long implored, some envious fiend
Should mar my joy! Oh, I must stem the tide
Of nature's transport! In her childhood's home
I see my daughter; me she knows not — heeds
not —

Nor answers to a mother's voice of love!
Ope, ye dear eyelids — hands be warm — and heave
Thou lifeless bosom with responsive throbs
To mine! 'Tis she! — Diego, look! 'tis Beatrice!
The long-concealed — the lost — the rescued one!
Before the world I claim her for my own!

Chorus. (BOHEMUND) New signs of terror to my
boding soul

Are pictured; — in amazement lost I stand!
What light shall pierce this gloom of mystery?

ISAB. (*to the Chorus, who exhibit marks of confusion and embarrassment*)

O ye hard hearts! Ye rude unpitying men!
A mother's transport from your breasts of steel
Rebounds, as from the rocks the heaving surge!
I look around your train, nor mark one glance
Of soft regard. Where are my sons? Oh tell me
Why come they not, and from their beaming eyes
Speak comfort to my soul? For here environed,
I stand amid the desert's raging brood,
Or monsters of the deep!

DIEGO. She opes her eyes!
She moves! She lives!

ISAB. She lives! On me be thrown
Her earliest glance!

DIEGO. See! They are closed again —
She shudders!

ISAB. (*to the Chorus*) Quick! Retire — your aspect
frights her. [*Chorus steps back.*]

BOHEM. Well pleased I shun her sight.

DIEGO. With outstretched eyes,
And wonderstruck, she seems to measure thee.

BEAT. Not strange those lineaments — where am I?

ISAB. Slowly
Her sense returns.

DIEGO. Behold! upon her knees
She sinks.

BEAT. O angel visage of my mother!

ISAB. Child of my heart!

BEAT. See! kneeling at thy feet
The guilty one!

ISAB. I hold thee in my arms!
Enough — forgotten all!

DIEGO. Look in my face,
Canst thou remember me?

BEAT. The reverend brows
Of honest old Diego!

ISAB. Faithful guardian
Of thy young years.

BEAT. And am I once again
With kindred?

ISAB. Nought but death shall part us more!

BEAT. Wilt thou ne'er send me to the stranger?

ISAB. Never!
Fate is appeased.

BEAT. And am I next thy heart?
And was it all a dream — a hideous dream?
My mother! at my feet he fell! — I know not
What brought me hither — yet 'tis well. — O bliss!
That I am safe in thy protecting arms;
They would have ta'en me to the princess mother —
Sooner to death!

ISAB. My daughter, calm thy fears;
Messina's princess —

BEAT. Name her not again!
At that ill-omened sound the chill of death
Creeps through my trembling frame.

ISAB. My child! but hear me —

BEAT. She has two sons by mortal hate dissevered,
Don Manuel and Don Cæsar —

ISAB. 'Tis myself!

Behold thy mother!

BEAT. Have I heard thee? Speak.

ISAB. I am thy mother, and Messina's Princess!

BEAT. Art thou Don Manuel's and Don Cæsar's
mother?

ISAB. And thine! They are thy brethren whom
thou nam'st.

BEAT. O gleam of horrid light!

ISAB. What troubles thee?

Say, whence this strange emotion?

BEAT. Yes, 'twas they!

Now I remember all; no dream deceived me,
They met — 'tis fearful truth! Unhappy men! —
Where have ye hid him?

*[She rushes toward the Chorus: they turn away
from her. A funeral march is heard in the
distance.]*

Chorus.

Horror! Horror!

ISAB.

Hid!

Speak — who is hid? and what is true? Ye stand
In silent dull amaze — as tho' ye fathomed
Her words of mystery! — In your faltering tones —
Your brows — I read of horrors yet unknown,
That would refrain my tongue! What is it? Tell me!
I will know all! Why fix ye on the door
That awe-struck gaze? What mournful music sounds?

[The march is heard nearer.]

Chorus. (BOHEMUND) It comes! it comes! and all
shall be declared

With terrible voice. My mistress! steel thy heart,

Be firm, and bear with courage what awaits thee —
 For more than woman's soul thy destined griefs
 Demand.

ISAB. What comes? and what awaits me? Hark!
 With fearful tones the death-wail smites mine ear —
 It echoes thro' the house! Where are my sons?

[*The first Semichorus brings in the body of DON
 MANUEL on a bier, which is placed at the
 side of the stage. A black pall is spread
 over it.*

ISABELLA, BEATRICE, DIEGO.

Both Choruses.

First Chorus (CAJETAN).

With Sorrow in his train,
 From street to street the King of Terror glides;
 With stealthy foot, and slow
 He creeps where'er the fleeting race
 Of man abides!
 In turn at every gate
 Is heard the dreaded knock of Fate,
 The message of unutterable woe!

BERENGAR.

When, in the sere
 And Autumn leaves decayed,
 The mournful forest tells how quickly fade
 The glories of the year!
 When in the silent tomb oppress,
 Frail man, with weight of days,
 Sinks to his tranquil rest;
 Contented Nature but obeys
 Her everlasting law, —
 The general doom awakes no shuddering awe!

But, mortals, oh ! prepare
 For mightier ills : with ruthless hand,
 Fell murder cuts the holy band —
 The kindred tie : insatiate Death,
 With unrelenting rage,
 Bears to his bark the flower of blooming age !

CAJETAN.

When clouds athwart the lowering sky
 Are driven — when bursts with hollow moan
 The thunder's peal — our trembling bosoms own
 The might of awful Destiny !
 Yet oft the lightning's glare
 Darts sudden thro' the cloudless air : —
 Then in thy short delusive day
 Of bliss, oh ! dread the treacherous snare ;
 Nor prize the fleeting goods and vain,
 The flowers that bloom but to decay !
 Nor wealth, nor joy, nor aught but pain,
 Was e'er to mortal's lot secure : —
 Our first best lesson — to endure !

ISAB. What shall I hear ? What horrors lurk
 beneath

This funeral pall ?

*[She steps toward the bier, but suddenly pauses,
 and stands irresolute.]*

Some strange mysterious dread
 Enthrals my sense. I would approach, and sudden
 The ice-cold grasp of terror holds me back !

*[To BEATRICE, who has thrown herself between her
 and the bier.]*

Whate'er it be, I will unveil —

*[On raising the pall, she discovers the body of
 DON MANUEL.]*

Eternal Powers ! It is my son !

[*She stands in mute horror. BEATRICE sinks to the ground with a shriek of anguish near the bier.*

Chorus. Unhappy mother! 'tis thy son. Thy lips
Have uttered what my faltering tongue denied!

ISAB. My soul! My Manuel! O eternal grief!
And it is thus I see thee? Thus thy life
Has bought thy sister from the spoiler's rage?
Where was thy brother? Could no arm be found
To shield thee? — O be curst the hand that dug
These gory wounds! A curse on her that bore
The murderer of my son! Ten thousand curses
On all their race!

Chorus. Woe! Woe!

ISAB. And is it thus
Ye keep your word, ye gods? Is this your truth?
Alas! for him that trusts with honest heart
Your soothing wiles. Why have I hoped and trembled?
And this the issue of my prayers! Attend,
Ye terror-stricken witnesses, that feed
Your gaze upon my anguish; learn to know
How warning visions cheat, and boding seers
But mock our credulous hopes:—let none believe
The voice of Heaven!

When in my teeming womb
This daughter lay, her father, in a dream,
Saw from his nuptial couch two laurels grow,
And in the midst a lily all in flames,
That catching swift the boughs and knotted stems
Burst forth with crackling rage, and o'er the house
Spread in one mighty sea of fire. Perplexed
By this terrific dream, my husband sought
The counsels of the mystic art, and thus
Pronounced the sage — "If I a daughter bore,
The murderess of his sons, the destined spring
Of ruin to our house, the baleful child
Should see the light."

Chorus (CAJETAN and BOHEMUND).

What hast thou said, my mistress?

Woe! Woe!

ISAB. For this her ruthless father spoke
The dire behest of death. I rescued her,
The innocent, the doomed one: — from my arms
The babe was torn: to stay the curse of Heaven,
And save my sons, the mother gave her child;
And now by robber hands her brother falls; —
My child is guiltless; — O, she slew him not!

Chorus. Woe! Woe!

ISAB. No trust the fabling readers of the stars
Have e'er deserved! Hear how another spoke
With comfort to my soul, and him I deemed
Inspired to voice the secrets of the skies!
"My daughter should unite in love the hearts
Of my dissevered sons:" — and thus their tales
Of curse and blessing on her head proclaim
Each other's falsehood. No! she ne'er has brought
A curse — the innocent! nor time was given
The blessed promise to fulfil! Their tongues
Were false alike — their boasted art in vain —
With trick of words they cheat our credulous ears,
Or are themselves deceived! Nought ye may know
Of dark futurity, the sable streams
Of hell the fountain of your hidden lore,
Or yon bright spring of everlasting light!

First Chorus (CAJETAN).

Woe! Woe! thy tongue refrain!
Oh, pause, nor thus with impious rage
The might of Heaven profane;
The holy oracles are wise —
Expect with awe thy coming destinies!

ISAB. My tongue shall speak as prompts my swelling heart;

My griefs shall cry to Heaven! Why do we lift
 Our suppliant hands, and at the sacred shrines
 Kneel to adore? Good easy dupes! What win we
 From faith and pious awe? — to touch with prayer
 The tenants of yon azure realms on high
 Were hard as with an arrow's point to pierce
 The silvery moon. Hid is the wound of Time,
 Impregnable to mortal glance, and deaf
 The adamantine walls of heaven rebound
 The voice of anguish: — O 'tis one, whate'er
 The flight of birds — the aspect of the stars!
 The book of nature is a maze — a dream
 The sage's art, — and every sign a falsehood!

Second Chorus (BOHEMUND).

Woe! Woe! Ill-fated woman, stay
 Thy maddening blasphemies;
 Thou but disown'st, with purblind eyes,
 The flaming orb of day!
 Confess the gods — they dwell on high —
 They circle thee with awful majesty!

All the Knights.

Confess the gods — they dwell on high —
 They circle thee with awful majesty!

BEATRICE.

Why hast thou saved thy daughter, and defied
 The curse of Heaven, that marked me in thy womb
 The child of woe? Short-sighted mother! — vain
 Thy little arts, to cheat the doom declared
 By the all-wise interpreters, that knit
 The far and near; and with prophetic ken,
 See the late harvest spring in times unborn.
 O thou hast wrought destruction on thy race,

Withholding from the avenging gods their prey ;
 Threefold, with new embittered rage, they ask
 The direful penalty ; no thanks thy boon
 Of life deserves — the fatal gift was sorrow !

*Second Chorus (BERENGAR) looking toward the door with
 signs of agitation.*

Hark to the sound of dread !
 The rattling brazen din I hear !
 Of hell-born snakes the hissing tones are near !
 Yes — 'tis the Furies' tread !

CAJETAN.

In crumbling ruin wide,
 Fall, fall, thou roof, and sink thou trembling floor
 That bear'st the dread unearthly stride !
 Ye sable damps arise !
 Mount from the abyss in smoky spray,
 And pall the brightness of the day !
 Vanish, ye guardian powers !
 They come ! The avenging deities !

DON CÆSAR, ISABELLA, BEATRICE. *The Chorus.*

On the entrance of DON CÆSAR, the Chorus station themselves before him imploringly. He remains standing alone in the centre of the stage.

BEAT. Alas ! 'tis he —

ISAB. (*stepping to meet him*) My Cæsar ! O, my son !

And is it thus I meet thee ? Look ! Behold !
 The crime of hand accurst ! —

[*She leads him to the corse.*

First Chorus (CAJETAN, BERENGAR).

Break forth once more
Ye wounds! Flow, flow, in swarthy flood,
Thou streaming gore!

ISAB. Shuddering with earnest gaze, and motionless,
Thou stand'st: yes! there my hopes repose, and all
That earth has of thy brother; in the bud
Nipp'd is your concord's tender flower, nor ever
With beauteous fruit shall glad a mother's eyes.

DON C. Be comforted; thy sons, with honest heart,
To peace aspired, but Heaven's decree was blood!

ISAB. I know thou lovedst him well; I saw be-
tween ye,
With joy, the bands of nature sweetly twined;
Thou wouldst have borne him in thy heart of hearts
With rich atonement of long wasted years!
But see — fell murder thwarts thy dear design,
And nought remains but vengeance!

DON C. Come, my mother,
This is no place for thee. Oh, haste and leave
This sight of woe! [*He endeavours to drag her away.*]

ISAB. (*throwing herself into his arms*) Thou liv'st!
I have a son!

BEAT. Alas! my mother!

DON C. On this faithful bosom
Weep out thy pains; — nor lost thy son, — his love
Shall dwell immortal in thy Cæsar's breast.

First Chorus (CAJETAN, BERENGAR, MANFRED).

Break forth, ye wounds! —
Dumb witnesses! — the truth proclaim;
Flow fast, thou gory stream!

ISAB. (*clasping the hands of DON CÆSAR and BEA-
TRICE*) My children!

DON C. Oh, 'tis ecstasy! my mother,
To see her in thy arms! — henceforth in love
A daughter — sister —

ISAB. (*interrupting him*) Thou hast kept thy
word,

My son; — to thee I owe the rescued one;
Yes, thou hast sent her —

DON C. (*in astonishment*) Whom, my mother, sayest
thou,

That I have sent?

ISAB. She stands before thine eyes —

Thy sister.

DON C. She! My sister?

ISAB. Ay, what other?

DON C. My sister?

ISAB. Thou hast sent her to me!

DON C. Horror!

His sister, too!

Chorus. Woe! Woe!

BEAT. Alas! my mother!

ISAB. Speak! I am all amaze!

DON C. Be curst the day

When I was born!

ISAB. Eternal powers!

DON C. Accurst

The womb that bore me; curst thy secret arts,
The spring of all this woe; instant to crush thee,
Though the dread thunder swept — ne'er should this
arm

Refrain the bolts of death: — I slew my brother!
Hear it and tremble! in her arms I found him —
She was my love, my chosen bride; — and he —
My brother — in her arms! Thou hast heard all!
If it be true — oh, if she be my sister —
And his! — then I have done a deed that mocks
The power of sacrifice and prayers to ope
The gates of mercy to my soul!

Chorus (BOHEMUND).

The tidings on thy heart dismayed
 Have burst, and nought remains; behold!
 'Tis come, nor long delayed,
 Whate'er the warning seers foretold:
 They spoke the message from on high,
 Their lips proclaimed resistless destiny!
 The mortal shall the curse fulfil,
 Who seeks to turn predestined ill.

ISAB. The gods have done their worst; if they be
 true

Or false, 'tis one — for nothing they can add
 To this — the measure of their rage is full.
 Why should I tremble that have nought to fear?
 My darling son lies murdered, and the living
 I call my son no more. Oh! I have borne
 And nourished at my breast a basilisk
 That stung my best-loved child. My daughter, haste,
 And leave this house of horrors — I devote it
 To the avenging fiends! — In evil hour
 'Twas crime that brought me hither, and of crime
 The victim I depart. Unwillingly
 I came — in sorrow I have lived — despairing
 I quit these halls; on me, the innocent,
 Descends this weight of woe! Enough — 'tis shown
 That Heaven is just, and oracles are true!

[*Exit, followed by* DIEGO.]

BEATRICE, DON CÆSAR, *The Chorus.*

DON C. (*detaining* BEATRICE) My sister, wouldst
 thou leave me? On this head
 A mother's curse may fall — a brother's blood
 Cry with accusing voice to Heaven — all Nature
 Invoke eternal vengeance on my soul —
 But thou — Oh! curse me not — I cannot bear it!

[BEATRICE *points with averted eyes to the body.*
I have not slain thy lover! 'twas thy brother,
And mine, that fell beneath my sword; and near
As the departed one, the living owns
The ties of blood; remember, too, 'tis I
That most a sister's pity need — for pure
His spirit winged its flight, and I am guilty!

[BEATRICE *bursts into an agony of tears.*
Weep! I will blend my tears with thine — nay, more,
I will avenge thy brother; but the lover —
Weep not for him — thy passionate yearning tears
My inmost heart. Oh! from the boundless depths
Of our affliction, let me gather this,
The last and only comfort — but to know
That we are dear alike. One lot fulfilled
Has made our rights and wretchedness the same;
Entangled in one snare we fall together,
Three hapless victims of un pitying fate,
And share the mournful privilege of tears.
But when I think that for the lover more
Than for the brother bursts thy sorrow's tide,
Then rage and envy mingle with my pain,
And Hope's last balm forsakes my withering soul! —
Nor joyful, as beseems, can I requite
This injured shade: — yet after him content
To Mercy's throne my contrite spirit shall fly,
Sped by this hand — if dying I may know
That in one urn our ashes shall repose,
With pious office of a sister's care.

[*He throws his arms around her with passionate tenderness.*

I loved thee, as I ne'er had loved before,
When thou wert strange; and that I bear the curse
Of brother's blood, 'tis but because I loved thee
With measureless transport: love was all my guilt,
But now thou art my sister, and I claim
Soft pity's tribute.

[*He regards her with inquiring glances, and an air of painful suspense — then turns away with vehemence.*]

No! in this dread presence
I cannot bear these tears — my courage flies,
And doubt distracts my soul. Go, weep in secret —
Leave me in error's maze — but never, never,
Behold me more: I will not look again
On thee, nor on thy mother. Oh! how passion
Laid bare her secret heart! She never loved me!
She mourned her best-loved son — that was her cry
Of grief — and nought was mine but show of fond-
ness!

And thou art false as she! make no disguise —
Recoil with horror from my sight — this form
Shall never shock thee more — begone for ever! [*Exit.*

[She stands irresolute in a tumult of conflicting passions — then tears herself from the spot.

Chorus (CAJETAN).

Happy the man — his lot I prize —
That far from pomps and turmoil vain,
Child-like on Nature's bosom lies
Amid the stillness of the plain.
My heart is sad in the princely hall,
When from the towering pride of state,
I see with headlong ruin fall,
How swift! the good and great!
And he — from Fortune's storms at rest —
Smiles, in the quiet haven laid,
Who, timely warned, has owned how blest
The refuge of the cloistered shade;
To honour's race has bade farewell,
Its idle joys and empty shows;
Insatiate wishes learned to quell,
And lulled in Wisdom's calm repose: —

No more shall Passion's maddening brood
 Impel the busy scenes to try,
 Nor on his peaceful cell intrude
 The form of sad humanity!
 'Mid crowds and strife each mortal ill
 Abides — the grisly train of woe
 Shuns like the pest the breezy hill,
 To haunt the smoky marts below.

BERENGAR, BOHEMUND, and MANFRED.

On the mountains is freedom! the breath of decay
 Never sullies the fresh flowing air;
 O nature is perfect wherever we stray;
 'Tis man that deforms it with care.

The whole Chorus repeats.

On the mountains is freedom, etc.

DON CÆSAR, *the Chorus.*

DON C. (*more collected*) I use the princely rights —
 'tis the last time —

To give this body to the ground, and pay
 Fit honours to the dead. So mark, my friends,
 My bosom's firm resolve, and quick fulfil
 Your lord's behest. Fresh in your memory lives
 The mournful pomp, when to the tomb ye bore
 So late my royal sire; scarce in these halls
 Are still the echoes of the funeral wail; —
 Another corse succeeds, and in the grave
 Weighs down its fellow-dust — almost our torch,
 With borrowed lustre from the last, may pierce
 The monumental gloom; and on the stair,
 Blend in one throng confused two mourning trains.
 Then in the sacred royal dome that guards
 The ashes of my sire, prepare with speed
 The funeral rites; unseen of mortal eye,

And noiseless be your task — let all be graced,
As then, with circumstance of kingly state.

BOHEM. My prince, it shall be quickly done; for
still

Upreared, the gorgeous catafalque recalls
The dread solemnity; no hand disturbed
The edifice of Death.

DON C. The yawning grave
Amid the haunts of life? No goodly sign
Was this: the rites fulfilled, why lingered yet
The trappings of the funeral show?

BOHEM. Your strife
With fresh embittered hate o'er all Messina
Woke Discord's maddening flames, and from the
dead

Our cares withdrew — so desolate remained,
And closed the sanctuary.

DON C. Make no delay;
This very night fulfil your task, for well
Beseems the midnight gloom! To-morrow's sun
Shall find this palace cleansed of every stain,
And light a happier race.

[*Exit the Second Chorus, with the body of* DON
MANUEL.

CAJET. Shall I invite
The brotherhood of monks, with rites ordained
By Holy Church of old, to celebrate
The office of departed souls, and hymn
The buried one to everlasting rest?

DON C. Their strains above my tomb shall sound
for ever

Amid the torches' blaze — no solemn rites
Beseem the day when gory murder scares
Heaven's pardoning grace.

CAJET. O, let not wild despair
Tempt thee to impious rash resolve. My prince,

No mortal arm shall e'er avenge this deed;
And penance calms, with soft atoning power,
The wrath on high.

DON C. If for eternal justice
Earth has no minister, myself shall wield
The avenging sword; though Heaven, with gracious
 ear,
Inclines to sinners' prayers, with blood alone
Atoned is murder's guilt.

CAJET. To stem the tide
Of dire misfortune, that with maddening rage
Bursts o'er your house, were nobler than to pile
Accumulated woe.

DON C. The curse of old
Shall die with me! Death self-imposed alone
Can break the chain of Fate.

CAJET. Thou ow'st thyself
A sovereign to this orphaned land, by thee
Robbed of its other lord!

DON C. The avenging gods
Demand their prey — some other deity
May guard the living!

CAJET. Wide as e'er the sun
In glory beams, the realm of Hope extends;
But — Oh, remember! — nothing may we gain
From Death!

DON C. Remember thou thy vassal's duty; —
Remember, and be silent! Leave to me
To follow, as I list, the spirit of power
That leads me to the goal. No happy one
May look into my breast: — but if thy prince
Owns not a subject's homage, dread at least
The murderer! — the accurst! — and to the head
Of the unhappy — sacred to the gods —
Give honours due. The pangs that rend my soul —
What I have suffered — what I feel — have left
No place for earthly thoughts!

DONNA ISABELLA, DON CÆSAR, *The Chorus.*

ISAB. (*enters with hesitating steps, and looks irresolutely toward DON CÆSAR; at last she approaches, and addresses him with collected tones*)

I thought mine eyes should ne'er behold thee more; —
Thus I had vowed despairing! Oh, my son!
How quickly all a mother's stern resolves
Melt into air! 'Twas but the cry of rage
That stifled Nature's pleading voice; but now
What tidings of mysterious import call me
Forth from the desolate chambers of my sorrow?
Shall I believe it? Is it true? — one day
Robs me of both my sons?

Chorus.

Behold! with willing steps and free,
Thy son prepares to tread
The paths of dark eternity —
The silent mansions of the dead.
My prayers are vain; but thou, with power confest
Of nature's holiest passion, storm his breast!

ISAB. I call the curses back — that in the frenzy
Of blind despair on thy beloved head
I poured. A mother may not curse the child
That from her nourishing breast drew life, and gave
Sweet recompense for all her travail past:
Heaven would not hear the impious vows; they fell
With quick rebound, and heavy with my tears,
Down from the flaming vault.

Live! live! my son!

For I may rather bear to look on thee —
The murderer of one child — than weep for both!

DON C. Heedless and vain, my mother, are thy
prayers

And on the soil by gory murder stained
Shall rise the purifying fane.

DON C.

We pluck

The arrow from the wound — but the torn heart
Shall ne'er be healed. Let him who can, drag on
A weary life of penance and of pain,
To cleanse the spot of everlasting guilt ; —
I would not live the victim of despair ;
No ! I must meet with beaming eye the smile
Of happy ones, and breathe erect the air
Of liberty and joy. While yet alike
We shared thy love, then o'er my days of youth
Pale Envy cast his withering shade ; and now,
Think'st thou my heart could brook the dearer ties
That bind thee in thy sorrow to the dead ?
Death, in his undecaying palace throned,
To the pure diamond of perfect virtue
Sublimes the mortal, and with chastening fire
Each gathered stain of frail humanity
Purges and burns away ; high as the stars
Tower o'er this earthly sphere, he soars above me ;
And as by ancient hate dissevered long,
Brethren and equal denizens we lived,
So now my restless soul with envy pines,
That he has won from me the glorious prize
Of immortality, and like a god
In memory marches on to times unborn !

ISAB. My sons! Why have I called you to Mes-
sina?

To find for each a grave? I brought ye hither
To calm your strife to peace. Lo! Fate has turned
My hopes to blank despair.

DON C.

Whate'er was spoke,

My mother, is fulfilled! Blame not the end
By Heaven ordained. We trod our father's halls
With hopes of peace; and reconciled for ever,
Together we shall sleep in death.

ISAB. My son,
Live for thy mother! In the stranger's land,
Say, wouldst thou leave me friendless and alone,
To cruel scorn a prey — no filial arm
To shield my helpless age?

DON C. When all the world
With heartless taunts pursues thee, to our grave
For refuge fly, my mother, and invoke
Thy sons' divinity — we shall be gods!
And we will hear thy prayers: and as the Twins
Of Heaven, a beaming star of comfort shine
To the tost shipman — we will hover near thee
With present help, and soothe thy troubled soul!

ISAB. Live — for thy mother, live, my son —
Must I lose all?

[She throws her arms about him with passionate emotion. He gently disengages himself, and, turning his face away, extends to her his hand.]

DON C. Farewell!

ISAB. I can no more!
Too well my tortured bosom owns how weak
A mother's prayers: a mightier voice shall sound
Resistless on thy heart.

[She goes toward the entrance of the scene.]

My daughter, come!
A brother calls him to the realms of night;
Perchance with golden hues of earthly joy
The sister, the beloved, may gently lure
The wanderer to life again.

[BEATRICE appears at the entrance of the scene.]

DONNA ISABELLA, DON CÆSAR, and the Chorus.

DON C. *(on seeing her, covers his face with his hands)* My mother!
What hast thou done?

ISAB. (*leading BEATRICE forward*) A mother's prayers are vain!

Kneel at his feet — conjure him — melt his heart!
Oh! bid him live!

DON C. Deceitful mother, thus
Thou triest thy son! And wouldst thou stir my
soul

Again to passion's strife, and make the sun
Beloved once more, now when I tread the paths
Of everlasting night? See where he stands —
Angel of life! — and, wondrous beautiful,
Shakes from his plenteous horn the fragrant store
Of golden fruits and flowers, that breathe around
Divinest airs of joy; — my heart awakes
In the warm sunbeam — hope returns, and life
Thrills in my breast anew.

ISAB. (*to BEATRICE*) Thou wilt prevail!
Or none! Implore him that he live, nor rob
The staff and comfort of our days.

BEAT. The loved one
A sacrifice demands. Oh, let me die
To soothe a brother's shade! Yes, I will be
The victim! Ere I saw the light forewarned
To death, I live a wrong to Heaven! The curse
Pursues me still: — 'twas I that slew thy son —
I waked the slumbering furies of their strife —
Be mine the atoning blood!

CAJET. Ill-fated mother!
Impatient all thy children haste to doom,
And leave thee on the desolate waste alone
Of joyless life.

BEAT. Oh, spare thy precious days
For nature's band. Thy mother needs a son,
My brother, live for her! Light were the pang
To lose a daughter — but a moment shown,
Then snatched away!

DON C. (*with deep emotion*) 'Tis one to live or die,

Blest with a sister's love !

BEAT. Say — dost thou envy
Thy brother's ashes ?

DON C. In thy grief he lives
A hallowed life — my doom is death for ever !

BEAT. My brother !

DON C. Sister ! are thy tears for me ?

BEAT. Live for our mother !

DON C. (*dropping her hand and stepping back*)
For our mother ?

BEAT. (*hiding her head in his breast*) Live
For her and for thy sister !

Chorus. (BOHEMUND) She has won !
Resistless are her prayers. Despairing mother,
Awake to hope again — his choice is made !
Thy son shall live !

[*At this moment an anthem is heard. The folding-doors are thrown open, and in the Church is seen the Catafalque erected, and the coffin surrounded with candlesticks.*]

DON C. (*turning to the coffin*) I will not rob thee,
brother !

The sacrifice is thine : — Hark ! from the tomb,
Mightier than mother's tears, or sister's love,
Thy voice resistless cries : — my arms enfold
A treasure, potent with celestial joys,
To deck this earthly sphere, and make a lot
Worthy the gods ! but shall I live in bliss,
While in the tomb thy sainted innocence
Sleeps unavenged ? Thou, Ruler of our days,
All just — all wise — let not the world behold
Thy partial care ! I saw her tears ! — enough —
They flowed for me ! I am content : my brother !
I come !

[*He stabs himself with a dagger, and falls dead at his sister's feet. She throws herself into her mother's arms.*]

Chorus, CAJETAN. (after a deep silence) In dread
amaze I stand, nor know
If I should mourn his fate. One truth revealed
Speaks in my breast; — no good supreme is life;
But of all earthly ills the chief is — Guilt!

THE END.

The Use of the Chorus in Tragedy

THE LIFE OF THE CHIEF IN TIGRIS

The Use of the Chorus in Tragedy

A POETICAL work must vindicate itself:—if the execution be defective, little aid can be derived from commentaries.

On these grounds, I might safely leave the Chorus to be its own advocate, if we had ever seen it presented in an appropriate manner. But it must be remembered that a dramatic composition first assumes the character of a whole by means of representation on the stage. The poet supplies only the words, to which, in a lyrical tragedy, music and rhythmical motion are essential accessories. It follows, then, that if the Chorus is deprived of accompaniments appealing so powerfully to the senses, it will appear a superfluity in the economy of the drama—a mere hindrance to the development of the plot—destructive to the illusion of the scene, and wearisome to the spectators.

To do justice to the Chorus, more especially if our aims in poetry be of a grand and elevated character, we must transport ourselves from the actual to a possible stage. It is the privilege of art to furnish for itself whatever is requisite, and the accidental deficiency of auxiliaries ought not to confine the plastic imagination of the poet. He aspires to whatever is most dignified, he labours to realise the ideal in his own

mind — though in the execution of his purpose he must needs accommodate himself to circumstances.

The assertion so commonly made, that the public degrades art, is not well founded. It is the artist that brings the public to the level of his own conceptions; and, in every age in which art has gone to decay, it has fallen through its professors. The people need feeling alone, and feeling they possess. They take their station before the curtain with an unvoiced longing, with a multifarious capacity. They bring with them an aptitude for what is highest — they derive the greatest pleasure from what is judicious and true; and if, with these powers of appreciation, they deign to be satisfied with inferior productions, still, if they have once tasted what is excellent, they will, in the end, insist on having it supplied to them.

It is sometimes objected that the poet may labour according to an ideal — that the critic may judge from ideas, but that mere executive art is subject to contingencies, and depends for effect on the occasion. Managers will be obstinate; actors are bent on display — the audience is inattentive and unruly. Their object is relaxation, and they are disappointed if mental exertion be required, when they expected only amusement. But if the theatre be made instrumental toward higher objects, the pleasure of the spectator will not be increased, but ennobled. It will be a diversion, but a poetical one. All art is dedicated to pleasure, and there can be no higher and worthier end than to make men happy. The true art is that which provides the highest degree of pleasure; and this consists in the abandonment of the spirit to the free play of all its faculties.

Every one expects from the imaginative arts a certain emancipation from the bounds of reality: we are willing to give a scope to fancy, and recreate ourselves with the possible. The man who expects it the least

will nevertheless forget his ordinary pursuits, his every-day existence and individuality, and experience delight from uncommon incidents:—if he be of a serious turn of mind, he will acknowledge on the stage that moral government of the world which he fails to discover in real life. But he is, at the same time, perfectly aware that all is an empty show, and that, in a true sense, he is feeding only on dreams. When he returns from the theatre to the world of realities, he is again compressed within its narrow bounds; he is its denizen as before—for it remains what it was, and in him nothing has been changed. What, then, has he gained beyond a momentary illusive pleasure which vanished with the occasion?

It is because a passing recreation is alone desired, that a mere show of truth is thought sufficient. I mean that probability or *vraisemblance* which is so highly esteemed, but which the commonest workers are able to substitute for the true.

Art has for its object not merely to afford a transient pleasure, to excite to a momentary dream of liberty; its aim is to make us absolutely free; and this it accomplishes by awakening, exercising, and perfecting in us a power to remove to an objective distance the sensible world; (which otherwise only burdens us as rugged matter and presses us down with a brute influence); to transform it into the free working of our spirit, and thus acquire a dominion over the material by means of ideas. For the very reason also that true art requires somewhat of the objective and real, it is not satisfied with a show of truth. It rears its ideal edifice on truth itself—on the solid and deep foundations of nature.

But how art can be at once altogether ideal, yet in the strictest sense real;—how it can entirely leave the actual, and yet harmonise with nature, is a problem to the multitude:—and hence the distorted views which

prevail in regard to poetical and plastic works ; for to ordinary judgments these two requisites seem to counteract each other.

It is commonly supposed that one may be attained by the sacrifice of the other : — the result is a failure to arrive at either. One to whom nature has given a true sensibility, but denied the plastic imaginative power, will be a faithful painter of the real ; he will adapt casual appearances, but never catch the spirit of nature. He will only reproduce to us the matter of the world, which, not being our own work, the product of our creative spirit, can never have the beneficent operation of art, of which the essence is freedom. Serious, indeed, but unpleasing, is the cast of thought with which such an artist and poet dismisses us ; — we feel ourselves painfully thrust back into the narrow sphere of reality by means of the very art which ought to have emancipated us. On the other hand, a writer, endowed with a lively fancy, but destitute of warmth and individuality of feeling, will not concern himself in the least about truth ; he will sport with the stuff of the world, and endeavour to surprise by whimsical combinations ; and as his whole performance is nothing but foam and glitter, he will, it is true, engage the attention for a time, but build up and confirm nothing in the understanding. His playfulness is, like the gravity of the other, thoroughly unpoetical. To string together at will fantastical images, is not to travel into the realm of the ideal ; and the imitative reproduction of the actual cannot be called the representation of nature. Both requisites stand so little in contradiction to each other that they are rather one and the same thing ; that art is only true inasmuch as it altogether forsakes the actual, and becomes purely ideal. Nature herself is an idea of the mind, and is never presented to the senses. She lies under the veil of appearances, but is herself never apparent. To the art of the ideal alone

is lent, or, rather, absolutely given, the privilege to grasp the spirit of the all, and bind it in a corporeal form.

Yet, in truth, even Art cannot present it to the senses, but by means of her creative power to the imaginative faculty alone; and it is thus that she becomes more true than all reality, and more real than all experience. It follows from these premises that the artist can use no single element taken from reality as he finds it — that his work must be ideal in all its parts, if it be designed to have, as it were, an intrinsic reality, and to harmonise with nature.

What is true of art and poetry, in the abstract, holds good as to their various kinds; and we may apply what has been advanced to the subject of tragedy. In this department, it is still necessary to controvert the ordinary notion of the natural, with which poetry is altogether incompatible. A certain ideality has been allowed in painting, though, I fear, on grounds rather conventional than intrinsic; but in dramatic works what is desired is illusion, which, if it could be accomplished by means of the actual, would be, at best, a paltry deception. All the externals of a theatrical representation are opposed to this notion; all is merely a symbol of the real. The day itself in a theatre is an artificial one; the metrical dialogue is itself ideal; yet the conduct of the play must forsooth be real, and the general effect sacrificed to a part. Thus the French, who have utterly misconceived the spirit of the ancients, adopted on the stage the unities of time and place in the most common and empirical sense; as though there were any place but the bare ideal one, or any other time than the mere sequence of the incidents.

By the introduction of a metrical dialogue an important progress has been made toward the poetical tragedy. A few lyrical dramas have been successful on the stage, and poetry, by its own living energy, has

triumphed over prevailing prejudices. But so long as these erroneous views are entertained little has been done — for it is not enough barely to tolerate as a poetic license that which is, in truth, the essence of all poetry. The introduction of the Chorus would be the last and decisive step; and if it only served this end, namely, to declare open and honourable warfare against naturalism in art, it would be for us a living wall which Tragedy had drawn around herself, to guard her from contact with the world of reality, and maintain her own ideal soil, her poetical freedom.

It is well known that the Greek tragedy had its origin in the Chorus; and though, in process of time, it became independent, still it may be said that poetically, and in spirit, the Chorus was the source of its existence, and that without these persevering supporters and witnesses of the incident a totally different order of poetry would have grown out of the drama. The abolition of the Chorus, and the debasement of this sensibly powerful organ into the characterless substitute of a confidant, is by no means such an improvement in tragedy as the French, and their imitators, would have it supposed to be.

The old tragedy, which at first only concerned itself with gods, heroes and kings, introduced the Chorus as an essential accompaniment. The poets found it in nature, and for that reason employed it. It grew out of the poetical aspect of real life. In the new tragedy it becomes an organ of art which aids in making the poetry prominent. The modern poet no longer finds the Chorus in nature; he must needs create and introduce it poetically; that is, he must resolve on such an adaptation of his story as will admit of its retrocession to those primitive times, and to that simple form of life.

The Chorus thus renders more substantial service to the modern dramatist than to the old poet — and for

this reason, that it transforms the commonplace actual world into the old poetical one; that it enables him to dispense with all that is repugnant to poetry, and conducts him back to the most simple, original, and genuine motives of action. The palaces of kings are in these days closed — courts of justice have been transferred from the gates of cities to the interior of buildings; writing has narrowed the province of speech; the people itself — the sensibly living mass — when it does not operate as brute force, has become a part of the civil polity, and thereby an abstract idea in our minds; the deities have returned within the bosoms of mankind. The poet must reopen the palaces — he must place courts of justice beneath the canopy of heaven — restore the gods, reproduce every extreme which the artificial frame of actual life has abolished — throw aside every factitious influence on the mind or condition of man which impedes the manifestation of his inward nature and primitive character, as the statuary rejects modern costume: — and of all external circumstances adopts nothing but what is palpable in the highest of forms — that of humanity.

But precisely as the painter throws around his figures draperies of ample volume, to fill up the space of his picture richly and gracefully, to arrange its several parts in harmonious masses, to give due play to colour, which charms and refreshes the eye — and at once to envelop human forms in a spiritual veil, and make them visible — so the tragic poet inlays and entwines his rigidly contracted plot and the strong outlines of his characters with a tissue of lyrical magnificence, in which, as in flowing robes of purple, they move freely and nobly, with a sustained dignity and exalted repose.

In a higher organisation, the material, or the elementary, need not be visible; the chemical colour vanishes in the finer tints of the imaginative one. The material, however, has its peculiar effect, and may be included

in an artistical composition. But it must deserve its place by animation, fulness, and harmony, and give value to the ideal forms which it surrounds, instead of stifling them by its weight.

In respect of the pictorial art, this is obvious to ordinary apprehension, yet in poetry likewise, and in the tragical kind, which is our immediate subject, the same doctrine holds good. Whatever fascinates the senses alone is mere matter, and the rude element of a work of art:—if it take the lead it will inevitably destroy the poetical—which lies at the exact medium between the ideal and the sensible. But man is so constituted that he is ever impatient to pass from what is fanciful to what is common; and reflection must, therefore, have its place even in tragedy. But to merit this place it must, by means of delivery, recover what it wants in actual life; for if the two elements of poetry, the ideal and the sensible, do not operate with an inward mutuality, they must at least act as allies—or poetry is out of the question. If the balance be not intrinsically perfect, the equipoise can only be maintained by an agitation of both scales.

This is what the Chorus effects in tragedy. It is, in itself, not an individual but a general conception; yet it is represented by a palpable body which appeals to the senses with an imposing grandeur. It forsakes the contracted sphere of the incidents to dilate itself over the past and future, over distant times and nations, and general humanity, to deduce the grand results of life, and pronounce the lessons of wisdom. But all this it does with the full power of fancy—with a bold lyrical freedom which ascends, as with godlike step, to the topmost height of worldly things; and it effects it in conjunction with the whole sensible influence of melody and rhythm, in tones and movements.

The Chorus thus exercises a purifying influence on tragic poetry, insomuch as it keeps reflection apart

from the incidents, and by this separation arms it with a poetical vigour; as the painter, by means of a rich drapery, changes the ordinary poverty of costume into a charm and an ornament.

But as the painter finds himself obliged to strengthen the tone of colour of the living subject, in order to counterbalance the material influences — so the lyrical effusions of the Chorus impose upon the poet the necessity of a proportionate elevation of his general diction. It is the Chorus alone which entitles the poet to employ this fulness of tone, which at once charms the senses, pervades the spirit, and expands the mind. This one giant form on his canvas obliges him to mount all his figures on the cothurnus, and thus impart a tragical grandeur to his picture. If the Chorus be taken away, the diction of the tragedy must generally be lowered, or what is now great and majestic will appear forced and overstrained. The old Chorus introduced into the French tragedy would present it in all its poverty, and reduce it to nothing; yet, without doubt, the same accompaniment would impart to Shakespeare's tragedy its true significance.

As the Chorus gives life to the language — so also it gives repose to the action; but it is that beautiful and lofty repose which is the characteristic of a true work of art. For the mind of the spectator ought to maintain its freedom through the most impassioned scenes; it should not be the mere prey of impressions, but calmly and severely detach itself from the emotions which it suffers. The commonplace objection made to the Chorus, that it disturbs the illusion, and blunts the edge of the feelings, is what constitutes its highest recommendation; for it is this blind force of the affections which the true artist deprecates — this illusion is what he disdains to excite. If the strokes which tragedy inflicts on our bosoms followed without respite — the passion would overpower the action. We

should mix ourselves up with the subject matter, and no longer stand above it. It is by holding asunder the different parts, and stepping between the passions with its composing views, that the Chorus restores to us our freedom, which would else be lost in the tempest. The characters of the drama need this intermission in order to collect themselves; for they are no real beings who obey the impulse of the moment, and merely represent individuals—but ideal persons and representatives of their species, who enunciate the deep things of humanity.

Thus much on my attempt to revive the old Chorus on the tragic stage. It is true that choruses are not unknown to modern tragedy; but the Chorus of the Greek drama, as I have employed it—the Chorus, as a single ideal person, furthering and accompanying the whole plot—is of an entirely distinct character; and when, in discussion on the Greek tragedy, I hear mention made of choruses, I generally suspect the speaker's ignorance of his subject. In my view the Chorus has never been reproduced since the decline of the old tragedy.

I have divided it into two parts, and represented it in contest with itself; but this occurs where it acts as a real person, and as an unthinking multitude. As Chorus and an ideal person it is always one and entire. I have also several times dispensed with its presence on the stage. For this liberty I have the example of Æschylus, the creator of tragedy, and Sophocles, the greatest master of his art.

Another license it may be more difficult to excuse. I have blended together the Christian religion and the Pagan mythology, and introduced recollections of the Moorish superstition. But the scene of the drama is Messina—where these three religions either exercised a living influence, or appealed to the senses in monumental remains. Besides, I consider it a privilege of

poetry to deal with different religions as a collective whole, in which everything that bears an individual character, and expresses a peculiar mode of feeling, has its place. Religion itself, the idea of a Divine Power, lies under the veil of all religions; and it must be permitted to the poet to represent it in the form which appears the most appropriate to his subject.

Wilhelm Tell

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

HERMANN GESSLER, Governor of Schwytz and Uri.

WERNER, Baron of Attinghausen, free noble of Switzerland.

ULRICH VON RUDENS, his Nephew.

WERNER STAUFFACHER,

CONRAD HUNN,

HANS AUF DER MAUER.

JORG IM HOFE,

ULRICH DER SCHMIDT,

JOST VON WEILER,

ITEL REDING,

WALTER FÜRST,

WILHELM TELL,

ROSSELMANN, the Priest.

PETERMANN, Sacristan.

KUONI, Herdsman,

WERNI, Huntsman,

Ruodi, Fisherman.

ARNOLD OF MELCHTHAL,

CONRAD BAUMGARTEN,

MEYER VON SARNEN.

STRUTH VON WINKELRIED, } People of Unterwald.

KLAUS VON DER FLUE,

BURKHART AM BUHEL,

ARNOLD VON SEWA,

PFEIFFER OF LUCERNE.

KUNZ OF GERSAU.

JENNI, Fisherman's Son.

SEPPi, Herdsman's Son.

GERTRUDE, Stauffacher's Wife.

HEDWIG, Wife of Tell, Daughter of Fürst.

BERTHA OF BRUNECK, a rich Heiress.

ARMGART,

MECHTHILD,

ELSBETH,

HILDEGARD,

Peasant Women.

WALTER, }
 WILHELM, } Tell's Sons.
 FRIESSHARDT, }
 LEUTHOLD, } Soldiers.
 RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, Gessler's Master of the Horse.
 JOHANNES PARRICIDA, Duke of Suabia.
 STUSSI, Overseer.
 THE MAYOR OF URI.
 A COURIER.
 MASTER STONEMASON, COMPANIONS, AND WORKMEN.
 TASKMASTER.
 A CRIER.
 MONKS OF THE ORDER OF CHARITY.
 HORSEMEN OF GESSLER AND LANDENBERG.
 MANY PEASANTS; MEN AND WOMEN FROM THE WALD
 STETTEN.

Wilhelm Tell

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A high rocky shore of the Lake of Lucerne opposite Schwytz. The lake makes a bend into the land; a hut stands at a short distance from the shore; the fisher boy is rowing about in his boat. Beyond the lake are seen the green meadows, the hamlets and farms of Schwytz, lying in the clear sunshine. On the left are observed the peaks of the Hacken, surrounded with clouds; to the right, and in the remote distance, appear the Glaciers. The Ranz des Vaches, and the tinkling of cattle bells, continue for some time after the rising of the curtain.

FISHER BOY (*sings in his boat*).

Melody of the Ranz des Vaches.

The smile-dimpled lake woo'd to bathe in its deep,

A boy on its green shore had laid him to sleep;

Then heard he a melody

Floating along,

Sweet as the notes

Of an angel's song.

And as thrilling with pleasure he wakes from his rest,

The waters are rippling over his breast;

And a voice from the deep cries,
 "With me thou must go,
 I charm the young shepherd,
 I lure him below."

HERDSMAN (*on the mountains*).

Air. — Variation of the Ranz des Vaches.

Farewell, ye green meadows,
 Farewell, sunny shore,
 The herdsman must leave you,
 The summer is o'er.

We go to the hills, but you'll see us again,
 When the cuckoo calls, and the merry birds sing,
 When the flowers bloom afresh in glade and in glen,
 And the brooks sparkle bright in the sunshine of
 Spring.

Farewell, ye green meadows,
 Farewell, sunny shore,
 The herdsman must leave you,
 The summer is o'er.

CHAMOIS HUNTER (*appearing on the top of a cliff*).

Second Variation of the Ranz des Vaches.

On the heights peals the thunder, and trembles the
 bridge,

The huntsman bounds on by the dizzying ridge.

Undaunted he hies him

O'er ice-covered wild,

Where leaf never budded,

Nor Spring ever smiled ;

And beneath him an ocean of mist, where his eye

No longer the dwellings of man can espy ;

Through the parting clouds only

The earth can be seen,

Far down 'neath the vapour •
The meadows of green.

[*A change comes over the landscape. A rumbling, cracking noise is heard among the mountains. Shadows of clouds sweep across the scene.*

[RUODI, the fisherman, comes out of his cottage.
WERNI, the huntsman, descends from the rocks. KUONI, the shepherd, enters, with a milk pail on his shoulders, followed by SEPPI, his assistant.

RUODI. Come, Jenni, bustle, get the boat on shore.
The grizzly Vale-King¹ comes, the glaciers moan,
The Mytenstein² is drawing on his hood,
And from the Stormcleft chilly blows the wind;
The storm will burst, before we know what's what.

KUONI. 'Twill rain ere long; my sheep browse
eagerly,
And Watcher there is scraping up the earth.

WERNI. The fish are leaping, and the water-hen
Keeps diving up and down. A storm is brewing.

KUONI. (*to his boy*) Look, Seppi, if the beasts be
all in sight.

SEPPI. There goes brown Liesel, I can hear her
bells.

KUONI. Then all are safe; she ever ranges farthest.

RUODI. You've a fine chime of bells there, master
herdsman.

WERNI. And likely cattle, too. Are they your
own?

KUONI. I'm not so rich. They are the noble lord's
Of Attinghaus, and told off to my care.

¹The German is, *Thalvogt*, Ruler of the Valley — the name given figuratively to a dense gray mist which the south wind sweeps into the valleys from the mountain tops. It is well known as the precursor of stormy weather.

²A steep rock, standing on the north of Rütli, and nearly opposite to Brumen.

RUODI. How gracefully yon heifer bears her ribbon!

KUONI. Ay, well she knows she's leader of the herd,

And, take it from her, she'd refuse to feed.

RUODI. You're joking now. A beast devoid of reason —

WERNI. Easily said. But beasts have reason, too, —

And that we know, we chamois-hunters, well.

They never turn to feed — sagacious creatures! .

Till they have placed a sentinel ahead,

Who pricks his ears whenever we approach,

And gives alarm with clear and piercing pipe.

RUODI. (*to the shepherd*) Are you for home?

KUONI. The Alp is grazed quite bare.

WERNI. A safe return, my friend!

KUONI. The same to you!

Men come not always back from tracks like yours.

RUODI. But who comes here, running at topmost speed?

WERNI. I know the man; 'tis Baumgart of Alzellen.

BAUM. (*rushing in breathless*) For God's sake, ferryman, your boat!

RUODI. How now?

Why all this haste?

BAUM. Cast off! My life's at stake!

Set me across!

KUONI. Why, what's the matter, friend?

WERNI. Who are pursuing you? First tell us that.

BAUM. (*to the fisherman*) Quick, quick, man, quick! they're close upon my heels!

It is the viceroy's men are after me;

If they should overtake me, I am lost.

RUODI. Why are the troopers in pursuit of you?

BAUM. First make me safe and then I'll tell you all.

WERNI. There's blood upon your garments — how is this?

BAUM. The imperial seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg —

KUONI. How! What! The Wolfshot?¹ Is it he pursues you?

BAUM. He'll ne'er hurt man again; I've settled him.

ALL. (*starting back*) Now, God forgive you, what is this you've done!

BAUM. What every free man in my place had done. Mine own good household right I have enforced 'Gainst him that would have wrong'd my wife — my honour.

KUONI. How! Wronged you in your honour, did he so?

BAUM. That he did not fulfil his foul desire, Is due to God and to my trusty axe.

WERNI. And you have cleft his skull then, with your axe?

KUONI. O, tell us all! You've time enough, and more,

While he is getting out the boat there from the beach.

BAUM. When I was in the forest felling timber, My wife came running out in mortal fear.

"The seneschal," she said, "was in my house,

Had order'd her to get a bath prepared,

And thereupon had ta'en unseemly freedoms,

From which she rid herself, and flew to me."

Arm'd as I was, I sought him, and my axe

Has given his bath a bloody benison.

¹ In German, *Wolfenschiessen* — a young man of noble family, and a native of Unterwalden, who attached himself to the house of Austria and was appointed *Burvogt*, or Seneschal, of the Castle of Rossberg. He was killed by Baumgarten in the manner, and for the cause, mentioned in the text.

WERNI. And you did well; no man can blame the deed.

KUONI. The tyrant! Now he has his just reward!

We men of Unterwald have owed it long.

BAUM. The deed got wind, and now they're in pursuit.

Heavens! whilst we speak, the time is flying fast.

[*It begins to thunder.*]

KUONI. Quick, ferryman, and set the good man over.

RUODI. Impossible! a storm is close at hand, Wait till it pass! You must.

BAUM. Almighty heavens!

I cannot wait; the least delay is death.

KUONI. (*to the fisherman*) Push out — God with you! We should help our neighbours;

The like misfortune may betide us all.

[*Thunder and the roaring of the wind.*]

RUODI. The South-wind's up!¹ See how the lake is rising!

I cannot steer against both wind and wave.

BAUM. (*clasping him by the knees*) God so help you as now you pity me!

WERNI. His life's at stake. Have pity on him, man!

KUONI. He is a father: has a wife and children.

[*Repeated peals of thunder.*]

RUODI. What! and have I not, then, a life to lose, A wife and child at home as well as he?

See how the breakers foam, and toss, and whirl,

¹ Literally, The *Föhn* is loose! "When," says Müller, in his history of Switzerland, "the wind called the *Föhn* is high, the navigation of the lake becomes extremely dangerous. Such is its vehemence, that the laws of the country require that the fires shall be extinguished in the houses while it lasts, and the night watches are doubled. The inhabitants lay heavy stones upon the roofs of their houses, to prevent their being blown away."

And the lake eddies up from all its depths!
 Right gladly would I save the worthy man,
 But 'tis impossible, as you must see.

BAUM. (*still kneeling*) Then I must fall into the
 tyrant's hands,

And with the shore of safety close in sight!
 Yonder it lies! My eyes can see it clear,
 My very voice can echo to its shores.
 There is the boat to carry me across,
 Yet must I lie here helpless and forlorn.

KUONI. Look! who comes here?

RUODI. 'Tis Tell, ay, Tell, of Bürglen.¹
 [*Enter TELL with a crossbow.*]

TELL. What man is he that here implores for
 aid?

KUONI. He is from Alzellen, and, to guard his
 honour

From touch of foulest shame, has slain the Wolfshot,
 The imperial seneschal, who dwelt at Rossberg.
 The viceroy's troopers are upon his heels;
 He begs the ferryman to take him over,
 But frightened at the storm he says he won't.

RUODI. Well, there is Tell can steer as well as I,
 He'll be my judge, if it be possible.

[*Violent peals of thunder — the lake becomes more
 tempestuous.*]

Am I to plunge into the jaws of hell?

I should be mad to dare the desperate act.

TELL. The brave man thinks upon himself the last.
 Put trust in God, and help him in his need!

RUODI. Safe in the port, 'tis easy to advise.
 There is the boat, and there the lake! Try you!

TELL. The lake may pity, but the viceroy never.
 Come, risk it, man!

¹ Bürglen, the birthplace and residence of Tell. A chapel, erected in 1522, remains on the spot formerly occupied by his house.

SHEPHERD *and* HUNTSMAN. O save him! save him!
save him!

RUODI. Though 'twere my brother, or my darling
child,

I would not go. 'Tis Simon and Jude's day,
The lake is up, and calling for its victim.

TELL. Nought's to be done with idle talking here.
Each moment's precious; the man must be help'd,
Say, boatman, will you venture?

RUODI. No; not I.

TELL. In God's name, then, give me the boat! I will,
With my poor strength, see what is to be done!

KUONI. Ha, gallant Tell!

WERNI. That's like a huntsman true!

BAUM. You are my angel, my preserver, Tell.

TELL. I may preserve you from the viceroy's power,
But from the tempest's rage another must.
Yet better 'tis you fall into God's hands,
Than into those of men. [*To the herdsman.*

Herdsman, do thou

Console my wife if I should come to grief.
I could not choose but do as I have done.

[*He leaps into the boat.*

KUONI. (*to the fisherman*) A pretty man to keep a
ferry, truly!

What Tell could risk, you dared not venture on.

RUODI. Far better men would never cope with Tell.
There's no two such as he 'mong all our hills.

WERNI. (*who has ascended a rock*) Now he is off.
God help thee, gallant sailor!

Look how the little boat reels on the waves!

KUONI. (*on the shore*) There! they have swept clean
over it. And now

'Tis out of sight. Yet stay, there 'tis again!
Stoutly he stems the breakers, noble fellow!

SEPPI. Here come the troopers hard as they can
ride!

- KUONI. Heavens! so they do! Why, that was help, indeed. [*Enter a troop of horsemen.*]
- FIRST H. Give up the murderer! You have him here!
- SEC. H. This way he came! 'Tis useless to conceal him!
- RUODI and KUONI. Whom do you mean?
- FIRST H. (*discovering the boat*) The devil! What do I see?
- WERNI. (*from above*) Is't he in yonder boat ye seek? Ride on,
- If you lay to, you may o'ertake him yet.
- SEC. H. Curse on you, he's escaped!
- FIRST H. (*to the shepherd and fisherman*) You help'd him off,
- And you shall pay for it! Fall on their herds!
Down with the cottage! burn it! beat it down!
- [*They rush off.*]
- SEPPI. (*hurrying after them*) Oh, my poor lambs!
- KUONI. (*following him*) Unhappy me, my herds!
- WERNI. The tyrants!
- RUODI. (*wringing his hands*) Righteous Heaven!
Oh, when will come
Deliverance to this doom-devoted land?
- [*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.

A lime-tree in front of STAUFFACHER'S house at Steinen, in Schwytz, upon the public road, near a bridge.

WERNER STAUFFACHER and PFEIFFER of Lucerne enter into conversation.

PFEIFF. Ay, ay, friend Stauffacher, as I have said, Swear not to Austria, if you can help it.

Hold by the empire stoutly as of yore,
And God preserve you in your ancient freedom !

[Presses his hand warmly and is going.]

STAUFF. Wait till my mistress comes. Now do!
You are

My guest in Schwytz — I in Lucerne am yours.

PFEIFF. Thanks ! thanks ! But I must reach Ger-
sau to-day.

Whatever grievances your rulers' pride
And grasping avarice may yet inflict,
Bear them in patience — soon a change may come.
Another emperor may mount the throne.

But Austria's once, and you are hers for ever. *[Exit.]*

*[STAUFFACHER sits down sorrowfully upon a bench
under the lime-tree. Gertrude, his wife, enters,
and finds him in this posture. She places
herself near him, and looks at him for some
time in silence.]*

GERT. So sad, my love ! I scarcely know thee
now.

For many a day in silence I have mark'd
A moody sorrow furrowing thy brow.
Some silent grief is weighing on thy heart.
Trust it to me. I am thy faithful wife,
And I demand my half of all thy cares.

[STAUFFACHER gives her his hand and is silent.]

Tell me what can oppress thy spirits thus ?
Thy toil is blest — the world goes well with thee —
Our barns are full — our cattle, many a score ;
Our handsome team of well-fed horses, too,
Brought from the mountain pastures safely home,
To winter in their comfortable stalls.
There stands thy house — no nobleman's more fair !
'Tis newly built with timber of the best,
All grooved and fitted with the nicest skill ;
Its many glistening windows tell of comfort !
'Tis quarter'd o'er with scutcheons of all hues,

And proverbs sage, which passing travellers
Linger to read, and ponder o'er their meaning.

STAUFF. The house is strongly built, and hand-
somely,

But, ah! the ground on which we built it quakes.

GERT. Tell me, dear Werner, what you mean by
that?

STAUFF. No later gone than yesterday, I sat
Beneath this linden, thinking with delight
How fairly all was finished, when from Küsnacht
The viceroy and his men came riding by.
Before this house he halted in surprise:
At once I rose, and, as beseemed his rank,
Advanced respectfully to greet the lord
To whom the emperor delegates his power,
As judge supreme within our canton here.
"Who is the owner of this house?" he asked,
With mischief in his thoughts, for well he knew.
With prompt decision, thus I answered him:
"The emperor, your grace — my lord and yours,
And held by me in fief." On this he answered,
"I am the emperor's vice-regent here,
And will not that each peasant churl should build
At his own pleasure, bearing him as freely
As though he were the master in the land.
I shall make bold to put a stop to this!"
So saying, he, with menaces, rode off,
And left me musing with a heavy heart
On the fell purpose that his words betray'd.

GERT. My own dear lord and husband! Wilt thou
take

A word of honest counsel from thy wife?
I boast to be the noble Iberg's child,
A man of wide experience. Many a time,
As we sat spinning in the winter nights,
My sisters and myself, the people's chiefs
Were wont to gather round our father's hearth,

To read the old imperial charters, and
To hold sage converse on the country's weal.
Then heedfully I listened, marking well
What now the wise man thought, the good man
wished.

And garner'd up their wisdom in my heart.
Hear then, and mark me well ; for thou wilt see
I long have known the grief that weighs thee down.
The viceroy hates thee, fain would injure thee,
For thou hast cross'd his wish to bend the Swiss
In homage to this upstart house of princes,
And kept them staunch, like their good sires of old,
In true allegiance to the empire. Say,
Is't not so, Werner ? Tell me, am I wrong ?

STAUFF. 'Tis even so. For this doth Gessler hate me.

GERT. He burns with envy, too, to see thee living
Happy and free on thine ancestral soil,
For he is landless. From the emperor's self
Thou hold'st in fief the lands thy fathers left thee.
There's not a prince i' the empire that can show
A better title to his heritage ;
For thou hast over thee no lord but one,
And he the mightiest of all Christian kings.
Gessler, we know, is but a younger son,
His only wealth the knightly cloak he wears ;
He therefore views an honest man's good fortune
With a malignant and a jealous eye.
Long has he sworn to compass thy destruction.
As yet thou art uninjured. Wilt thou wait
Till he may safely give his malice vent ?
A wise man would anticipate the blow.

STAUFF. What's to be done?

GERT. Now hear what I advise.
Thou knowest well, how here with us in Schwytz
All worthy men are groaning underneath
This Gessler's grasping, grinding tyranny.

Doubt not the men of Unterwald as well,
And Uri, too, are chafing like ourselves,
At this oppressive and heart-wearying yoke.
For there, across the lake, the Landenberg
Wields the same iron rule as Gessler here —
No fishing-boat comes over to our side,
But brings the tidings of some new encroachment,
Some fresh outrage, more grievous than the last.
Then it were well that some of you — true men —
Men sound at heart, should secretly devise
How best to shake this hateful thralldom off.
Full sure I am that God would not desert you,
But lend His favour to the righteous cause.
Hast thou no friend in Uri, one to whom
Thou frankly may'st unbosom all thy thoughts?

STAUFF. I know full many a gallant fellow there,
And nobles, too, — great men, of high repute,
In whom I can repose unbounded trust. [*Rising.*
Wife! What a storm of wild and perilous thoughts
Hast thou stirr'd up within my tranquil breast!
The darkest musings of my bosom thou
Hast dragg'd to light, and placed them full before me
And what I scarce dared harbour e'en in thought,
Thou speakest plainly out with fearless tongue.
But hast thou weigh'd well what thou urgest thus?
Discord will come, and the fierce clang of arms,
To scare this valley's long unbroken peace,
If we, a feeble shepherd race, shall dare
Him to the fight that lords it o'er the world.
Ev'n now they only wait some fair pretext
For setting loose their savage warrior hordes,
To scourge and ravage this devoted land,
To lord it o'er us with the victor's rights,
And, 'neath the show of lawful chastisement,
Despoil us of our chartered liberties.

GERT. You, too, are men; can wield a battle-axe
As well as they. God ne'er deserts the brave.

STAUFF. Oh, wife ! a horrid, ruthless fiend is war,
That smites at once the shepherd and his flock.

GERT. What e'er great Heaven inflicts, we must endure ;
But wrong is what no noble heart will bear.

STAUFF. This house — thy pride — war, unrelenting war,
Will burn it down.

GERT. And did I think this heart
Enslaved and fettered to the things of earth,
With my own hand I'd hurl the kindling torch.

STAUFF. Thou hast faith in human kindness, wife ;
but war
Spares not the tender infant in its cradle.

GERT. There is a Friend to innocence in heaven.
Send your gaze forward, Werner — not behind.

STAUFF. We men may die like men, with sword in hand ;

But oh, what fate, my Gertrude, may be thine ?

GERT. None are so weak but one last choice is left.

A spring from yonder bridge and I am free !

STAUFF. (*embracing her*) Well may he fight for
hearth and home, that clasps

A heart so rare as thine against his own !

What are the host of emperors to him ?

Gertrude, farewell ! I will to Uri straight.

There lives my worthy comrade, Walter Fürst ;

His thoughts and mine upon these times are one.

There, too, resides the noble Banneret

Of Attinghaus. High though of blood he be,

He loves the people, honours their old customs.

With both of these I will take counsel, how

To rid us bravely of our country's foe.

Farewell ! and while I am away, bear thou

A watchful eye in management at home.

The pilgrim journeying to the house of God,

And holy friar, collecting for his cloister,
 To these give liberally from purse and garner.
 Stauffacher's houses would not be hid. Right out
 Upon the public way it stands, and offers
 To all that pass a hospitable roof.

[*While they are retiring, TELL enters with BAUMGARTEN.*

TELL. Now, then, you have no further need of me.
 Enter yon house. 'Tis Werner Stauffacher's,
 A man that is a father to distress.
 See, there he is, himself! Come, follow me.

[*They retire up. Scene changes.*

SCENE III.

A common near Altdorf. On an eminence in the background a castle in progress of erection, and so far advanced that the outline of the whole may be distinguished. The back part is finished: men are working at the front. Scaffolding, on which the workmen are going up and down. A slater is seen upon the highest part of the roof. All is bustle and activity.

TASKMASTER, MASON, WORKMEN and LABOURERS.

TASK. (*with a stick, urging on the workmen*) Up,
 up! You've rested long enough. To
 work!

The stones here! Now the mortar, and the lime!
 And let his lordship see the work advanced,
 When next he comes. These fellows crawl like snails!

[*To two labourers, with loads.*

What! call ye that a load? Go, double it.
 Is this the way ye earn your wages, laggards?

FIRST W. 'Tis very hard that we must bear the
 stones,
 To make a keep and dungeon for ourselves!

TASK. What's that you mutter? 'Tis a worthless race,

For nothing fit but just to milk their cows,
And saunter idly up and down the hills.

OLD MAN. (*sinks down exhausted*) I can no more.

TASK. (*shaking him*) Up, up, old man, to work!

FIRST W. Have you no bowels of compassion, thus
To press so hard upon a poor old man,
That scarce can drag his feeble limbs along?

MASTER MASON *and* WORKMEN. Shame, shame upon
you — shame! It cries to heaven.

TASK. Mind your own business. I but do my duty.

FIRST W. Pray, master, what's to be the name of this
Same castle, when 'tis built?

TASK. The Keep of Uri;

For by it we shall keep you in subjection.

WORK. The Keep of Uri?

TASK. Well, why laugh at that?

SEC. W. Keep Uri, will you, with this paltry place!

FIRST W. How many molehills such as that must
first

Be piled up each on each, ere you make

A mountain equal to the least in Uri?

[TASKMASTER *retires up the stage.*

MAS. M. I'll drown the mallet in the deepest lake
That served my hand on this accursed pile.

[*Enter* TELL *and* STAUFFACHER.

STAUFF. Oh, that I had not lived to see this sight!

TELL. Here 'tis not good to be. Let us proceed.

STAUFF. Am I in Uri, — Uri, freedom's home?

MAS. M. Oh, sir, if you could only see the vaults
Beneath these towers. The man that tenants them
Will ne'er hear cock crow more.

STAUFF. O God! O God!

MASON. Look at these ramparts and these but-
tresses,

That seem as they were built to last for ever.

TELL. What hands have built, my friend, hands can
 destroy. [*Pointing to the mountains.*
That home of freedom God hath built for us.

[*A drum is heard. People enter bearing a cap
 upon a pole, followed by a crier. Women
 and children thronging tumultuously after
 them.*

FIRST W. What means the drum? Give heed!

MASON. Why, here's a mumming!
 And look, the cap — what can they mean by that?

CRIER. In the emperor's name, give ear!

WORK. Hush! silence! hush!

CRIER. Ye men of Uri, ye do see this cap!

It will be set upon a lofty pole
 In Altdorf, in the market-place: and this
 Is the lord governor's good will and pleasure;
 The cap shall have like honour as himself,
 All do it reverence with bended knee,
 And head uncovered; thus the king will know
 Who are his true and loyal subjects here;
 His life and goods are forfeit to the crown
 That shall refuse obedience to the order.

[*The people burst out into laughter. The drum
 beats and the procession passes on.*

FIRST W. A strange device to fall upon indeed:
 Do reverence to a cap! A pretty farce!
 Heard ever mortal anything like this?

MAS. M. Down to a cap on bended knee, for-
 sooth!
 Rare jesting this with men of sober sense!

FIRST W. Nay, an it were the imperial crown! A
 cap!
 Merely the cap of Austria! I've seen it
 Hanging above the throne in Gessler's hall.

MASON. The cap of Austria? Mark that! A snare
 To get us into Austria's power, by Heaven!

WORK. No freeborn man will stoop to such disgrace.

MAS. M. Come — to our comrades, and advise with them! [*They retire up.*]

TELL. (to STAUFFACHER) You see how matters stand. Farewell, my friend!

STAUFF. Whither away? Oh, leave us not so soon.

TELL. They look for me at home. So fare ye well.

STAUFF. My heart's so full, and has so much to tell you.

TELL. Words will not make a heart that's heavy light.

STAUFF. Yet words may possibly conduct to deeds.

TELL. Endure in silence! We can do no more.

STAUFF. But shall we bear what is not to be borne?

TELL. Impetuous rulers have the shortest reigns.

When the fierce Southwind rises from his chasms,
Men cover up their fires, the ships in haste
Make for the harbour, and the mighty spirit
Sweeps o'er the earth, and leaves no trace behind.
Let every man live quietly at home;
Peace to the peaceful rarely is denied.

STAUFF. And is it thus you view our grievances?

TELL. The serpent stings not till it is provoked.
Let them alone; they'll weary of themselves,
When they shall see we are not to be roused.

STAUFF. Much might be done — did we stand fast together.

TELL. When the ship founders, he will best escape
Who seeks no other's safety but his own.

STAUFF. And you desert the common cause so coldly?

TELL. A man can safely count but on himself!

STAUFF. Nay, even the weak grow strong by union.

TELL. But the strong man is strongest when alone.

STAUFF. So, then, your country cannot count on you
If in despair she rise against her foes.

TELL. Tell rescues the lost sheep from yawning gulfs:

Is he a man, then, to desert his friends?
 Yet, whatsoe'er you do, spare me from council!
 I was not born to ponder and select;
 But when your course of action is resolved,
 Then call on Tell: you shall not find him fail.

[Exeunt severally. A sudden tumult is heard around the scaffolding.]

MASON. *(running in)* What's wrong?

FIRST W. *(running forward)* The slater's fallen from the roof.

BERTHA. *(rushing in)* Heavens! Is he dashed to pieces? Save him, help!

If help be possible, save him! Here is gold.

[Throws her trinkets among the people.]

MASON. Hence with your gold,—your universal charm,

And remedy for ill! When you have torn
 Fathers from children, husbands from their wives,
 And scattered woe and wail throughout the land,
 You think with gold to compensate for all.
 Hence! Till we saw you, we were happy men;
 With you came misery and dark despair.

BERTHA. *(to the TASKMASTER, who has returned)*
 Lives he? *[TASKMASTER shakes his head.]*

Ill-omened towers, with curses built,
 And doomed with curses to be tenanted! *[Exit.]*

SCENE IV.

The House of WALTER FÜRST. WALTER FURST and
 ARNOLD VON MELCHTHAL *enter simultaneously at different sides.*

MELCH. Good Walter Fürst.

FÜRST. If we should be surprised!
 Stay where you are. We are beset with spies.

MELCH. Have you no news for me from Unterwald?

What of my father? 'Tis not to be borne,
 Thus to be pent up like a felon here!
 What have I done so heinous that I must
 Skulk here in hiding, like a murderer?
 I only laid my staff across the fists
 Of the pert varlet, when, before my eyes,
 By order of the governor, he tried
 To drive away my handsome team of oxen.

FÜRST. You are too rash by far. He did no more
 Than what the governor had ordered him.
 You had transgress'd, and therefore should have paid
 The penalty, however hard, in silence.

MELCH. Was I to brook the fellow's saucy gibe,
 "That if the peasant must have bread to eat,
 Why, let him go and draw the plough himself!"
 It cut me to the very soul to see
 My oxen, noble creatures, when the knave
 Unyoked them from the plough. As though they felt
 The wrong, they lowed and butted with their horns.
 On this I could contain myself no longer,
 And, overcome by passion, struck him down.

FÜRST. O, we old men can scarce command our-
 selves!

And can we wonder youth breaks out of bounds?

MELCH. I'm only sorry for my father's sake!
 To be away from him, that needs so much
 My fostering care! The governor detests him,
 Because, whene'er occasion served, he has
 Stood stoutly up for right and liberty.
 Therefore they'll bear him hard — the poor old
 man!

And there is none to shield him from their gripe.
 Come what come may, I must go home again.

FÜRST. Compose yourself, and wait in patience till
 We get some tidings o'er from Unterwald.
 Away! away! I hear a knock! Perhaps
 A message from the viceroy! Get thee in!

You are not safe from Landenberger's¹ arm
In Uri, for these tyrants pull together.

MELCH. They teach us Switzers what *we* ought to
do.

FÜRST. Away! I'll call you when the coast is
clear. [MELCHTHAL *retires*.

Unhappy youth! I dare not tell him all
The evil that my boding heart predicts!
Who's there? The door ne'er opens, but I look
For tidings of mishap. Suspicion lurks
With darkling treachery in every nook.
Even to our inmost rooms they force their way,
These myrmidons of power; and soon we'll need
To fasten bolts and bars upon our doors.

[*He opens the door and steps back in surprise as*
WERNER STAUFFACHER *enters*.

What do I see? You, Werner? Now, by Heaven!

A valued guest, indeed. No man e'er set
His foot across this threshold, more esteem'd.

Welcome! thrice welcome; Werner, to my roof!

What brings you here? What seek you here in Uri?

STAUFF. (*shakes FÜRST by the hand*) The olden
times and olden Switzerland.

FÜRST. You bring them with you. See how glad
I am,

My heart leaps at the very sight of you.

Sit down — sit down, and tell me how you left
Your charming wife, fair Gertrude? Iberg's child,
And clever as her father. Not a man,
That wends from Germany, by Meinrad's Cell,²
To Italy, but praises far and wide

¹ Berenger von Landenberg, a man of noble family in Thurgau, and Governor of Unterwald, infamous for his cruelties to the Swiss, and particularly to the venerable Henry of the Halden. He was slain at the battle of Morgarten, in 1315.

² A cell built in the 9th century, by Meinrad, Count of Hohen-zollern, the founder of the Convent of Einsiedeln, subsequently alluded to in the text.

Your house's hospitality. But say,
Have you come here direct from Flüelen,
And have you noticed nothing on your way,
Before you halted at my door?

STAUFF. (*sits down*) I saw
A work in progress, as I came along,
I little thought to see — that likes me ill.

FÜRST. O friend! you've lighted on my thought at
once.

STAUFF. Such things in Uri ne'er were known before.
Never was prison here in man's remembrance,
Nor ever any stronghold but the grave.

FÜRST. You name it well. It is the grave of
freedom.

STAUFF. Friend, Walter Fürst, I will be plain with
you.

No idle curiosity it is
That brings me here, but heavy cares. I left
Thralldom at home, and thralldom meets me here.
Our wrongs, e'en now, are more than we can bear,
And who shall tell us where they are to end?
From eldest time the Switzer has been free,
Accustom'd only to the mildest rule.

Such things as now we suffer ne'er were known,
Since herdsman first drove cattle to the hills.

FÜRST. Yes, our oppressions are unparallel'd!
Why, even our own good lord of Attinghaus,
Who lived in olden times, himself declares
They are no longer to be tamely borne.

STAUFF. In Unterwalden yonder 'tis the same;
And bloody has the retribution been.
The imperial seneschal, the Wolfshot, who
At Rossberg dwelt, long'd for forbidden fruit —
Baumgarten's wife, that lives at Alzellen,
He tried to make a victim to his lust,
On which the husband slew him with his axe.

FÜRST. O, Heaven is just in all its judgments still!

Baumgarten, say you? A most worthy man.
Has he escaped, and is he safely hid?

STAUFF. Your son-in-law conveyed him o'er the
lake,

And he lies hidden in my house at Steinen.
He brought the tidings with him of a thing
That has been done at Sarnen, worse than all,
A thing to make the very heart run blood!

FÜRST. (*attentively*) Say on. What is it?

STAUFF. There dwells in Melchthal then,
Just as you enter by the road from Kerns,
An upright man, named Henry of the Halden,
A man of weight and influence in the Diet.

FÜRST. Who knows him not? But what of him?
Proceed.

STAUFF. The Landenberg, to punish some offence
Committed by the old man's son, it seems,
Had given command to take the youth's best pair
Of oxen from his plough; on which the lad
Struck down the messenger and took to flight.

FÜRST. But the old father — tell me, what of him?

STAUFF. The Landenberg sent for him, and required
He should produce his son upon the spot;
And when the old man protested, and with truth,
That he knew nothing of the fugitive,
The tyrant call'd his torturers.

FÜRST. (*springs up and tries to lead him to the other
side*) Hush, no more!

STAUFF. (*with increasing warmth*) "And though
thy son," he cried, "has 'scaped me now,
I have thee fast, and thou shalt feel my vengeance."
With that they flung the old man to the ground,
And plunged the pointed steel into his eyes.

FÜRST. Merciful Heaven!

MELCH. (*rushing out*) Into his eyes, his eyes?

STAUFF. (*addresses himself in astonishment to* WAL-
TER FÜRST) Who is this youth?

MELCH. (*grasping him convulsively*) Into his eyes?
Speak, speak!

FÜRST. Oh, miserable hour!

STAUFF. Who is it, tell me?

[STAUFFACHER *makes a sign to him.*

It is his son! All-righteous Heaven!

MELCH. And I

Must be from thence! What! into both his eyes?

FÜRST. Be calm, be calm; and bear it like a man!

MELCH. And all for me — for my mad wilful folly!
Blind, did you say? Quite blind — and both his eyes?

STAUFF. Ev'n so. The fountain of his sight is
quench'd,

He ne'er will see the blessed sunshine more.

FÜRST. Oh, spare his anguish!

MELCH. Never, never more!

[*Presses his hands upon his eyes and is silent for
some moments; then turning from one to the
other speaks in a subdued tone, broken by
sobs.*

O the eye's light, of all the gifts of Heaven,
The dearest, best! From light all beings live —
Each fair created thing — the very plants
Turn with a joyful transport to the light,
And he — he must drag on through all his days
In endless darkness! Never more for him
The sunny meads shall glow, the flow'rets bloom;
Nor shall he more behold the roseate tints
Of the iced mountain top! To die is nothing.
But to have life, and not have sight, — oh, that
Is misery indeed! Why do you look
So piteously at me? I have two eyes,
Yet to my poor blind father can give neither!
No, not one gleam of that great sea of light,
That with its dazzling splendour floods my gaze.

STAUFF. Ah, I must swell the measure of your
grief,

Instead of soothing it. The worst, alas!
Remains to tell. They've stripp'd him of his all;
Nought have they left him, save his staff, on which,
Blind, and in rags, he moves from door to door.

MELCH. Nought but his staff to the old eyeless
man!

Stripp'd of his all — even of the light of day,
The common blessing of the meanest wretch?
Tell me no more of patience, of concealment!
Oh, what a base and coward thing am I,
That on mine own security I thought,
And took no care of thine! Thy precious head
Left as a pledge within the tyrant's grasp!
Hence, craven-hearted prudence, hence! And all
My thoughts be vengeance, and the despot's blood!
I'll seek him straight — no power shall stay me now —
And at his hands demand my father's eyes.
I'll beard him 'mid a thousand myrmidons!
What's life to me, if in his heart's best blood
I cool the fever of this mighty anguish. [*He is going.*]

FÜRST. Stay, this is madness, Melchthal! What
avails

Your single arm against his power? He sits
At Sarnen high within his lordly keep,
And, safe within its battlemented walls,
May laugh to scorn your unavailing rage.

MELCH. And though he sat within the icy domes
Of yon far Schreckhorn — ay, or higher, where,
Veil'd since eternity, the Jungfrau soars,
Still to the tyrant would I make my way;
With twenty comrades minded like myself,
I'd lay his fastness level with the earth!
And if none follow me, and if you all,
In terror for your homesteads and your herds,
Bow in submission to the tyrant's yoke,
Round me I'll call the herdsmen on the hills,
And there beneath heaven's free and boundless roof,

Where men still feel as men, and hearts are true,
Proclaim aloud this foul enormity!

STAUFF. (*to FÜRST*) The measure's full — and are
we then to wait

Till some extremity —

MELCH. Peace! What extremity
Remains for us to dread? What, when our eyes
No longer in their sockets are secure?
Heavens! Are we helpless? Wherefore did we learn
To bend the cross-bow, — wield the battle-axe?
What living creature but in its despair,
Finds for itself a weapon of defence?
The baited stag will turn, and with the show
Of his dread antlers hold the hounds at bay;
The chamois drags the huntsman down th' abyss,
The very ox, the partner of man's toil,
The sharer of his roof, that meekly bends
The strength of his huge neck beneath the yoke,
Springs up, if he's provoked, whets his strong horn,
And tosses his tormentor to the clouds.

FÜRST. If the three cantons thought as we three do,
Something might, then, be done, with good effect.

STAUFF. When Uri calls, when Unterwald replies,
Schwytz will be mindful of her ancient league.¹

¹The League, or Bond, of the Three Cantons was of very ancient origin. They met and renewed it from time to time, especially when their liberties were threatened with danger. A remarkable instance of this occurred in the end of the 13th century, when Albert, of Austria, became emperor, and when, possibly, for the first time, the bond was reduced to writing. As it is important to the understanding of many passages of the play, a translation is subjoined of the oldest known document relating to it. The original, which is in Latin and German, is dated in August, 1291, and is under the seals of the whole of the men of Schwytz, the commonalty of the vale of Uri and the whole of the men of the upper and lower vales of Stanz.

THE BOND.

Be it known to every one, that the men of the Dale of Uri, the Community of Schwytz, as also the men of the mountains of

MELCH. I've many friends in Unterwald, and none
That would not gladly venture life and limb,
If fairly back'd and aided by the rest.
Oh! sage and reverend fathers of this land,
Here do I stand before your ripper years,
An unskill'd youth, who in the Diet must
Into respectful silence hush his voice.
Yet do not, for that I am young, and want
Experience, slight my counsel and my words.
'Tis not the wantonness of youthful blood
That fires my spirit; but a pang so deep
That e'en the flinty rocks must pity me.
You, too, are fathers, heads of families,
And you must wish to have a virtuous son
To reverence your gray hairs, and shield your eyes
With pious and affectionate regard.

Unterwald, in consideration of the evil times, have full confidently bound themselves, and sworn to help each other with all their power and might, property and people, against all who shall do violence to them, or any of them. That is our Ancient Bond.

Whoever hath a Seigneur, let him obey according to the conditions of his service.

We are agreed to receive into these dales no Judge, who is not a countryman and indweller, or who hath bought his place.

Every controversy amongst the sworn confederates shall be determined by some of the sagest of their number, and if any one shall challenge their judgment, then shall he be constrained to obey it by the rest.

Whoever intentionally or deceitfully kills another, shall be executed, and whoever shelters him shall be banished.

Whoever burns the property of another shall no longer be regarded as a countryman, and whoever shelters him shall make good the damage done.

Whoever injures another, or robs him, and hath property in our country, shall make satisfaction out of the same.

No one shall distrain a debtor without a judge, nor any one who is not his debtor, or the surety for such debtor.

Every one in these dales shall submit to the judge, or we, the sworn confederates, all will take satisfaction for all the injury occasioned by his contumacy. And if in any internal division the one party will not accept justice, all the rest shall help the other party. These decrees shall, God willing, endure eternally for our general advantage.

Do not, I pray, because in limb and fortune
 You still are unassail'd, and still your eyes
 Revolve undimm'd and sparkling in their spheres;
 Oh, do not, therefore, disregard our wrongs!
 Above you, also, hangs the tyrant's sword.
 You, too, have striven to alienate the land
 From Austria. This was all my father's crime:
 You share his guilt, and may his punishment.

STAUFF. (*to FÜRST*) Do thou resolve! I am prepared to follow.

FÜRST. First let us learn what steps the noble lords

Von Sillinen and Attinghaus propose.
 Their names would rally thousands to the cause.

MELCH. Is there a name within the Forest Mountains

That carries more respect than yours — and yours?
 On names like these the people build their trust
 In time of need — such names are household words.
 Rich was your heritage of manly worth,
 And richly have you added to its stores.
 What need of nobles? Let us do the work
 Ourselves. Yes, though we have to stand alone,
 We shall be able to maintain our rights.

STAUFF. The nobles' wrongs are not so great as ours.

The torrent, that lays waste the lower grounds,
 Hath not ascended to the uplands yet.
 But let them see the country once in arms,
 They'll not refuse to lend a helping hand.

FÜRST. Were there an umpire 'twixt ourselves and Austria,

Justice and law might then decide our quarrel.
 But our oppressor is our emperor too,
 And judge supreme. 'Tis God must help us, then,
 And our own arm! Be yours the task to rouse
 The men of Schwytz; I'll rally friends in Uri.

But whom are we to send to Unterwald?

MELCH. Thither send me. Whom should it more concern?

FÜRST. No, Melchthal, no; you are my guest, and I must answer for your safety.

MELCH. Let me go.

I know each forest track and mountain path;

Friends, too, I'll find, be sure, on every hand,

To give me willing shelter from the foe.

STAUFF. Nay, let him go; no traitors harbour there:

For tyranny is so abhorred in Unterwald,

No tools can there be found to work her will.

In the low valleys, too, the Alzeller

Will gain confederates, and rouse the country.

MELCH. But how shall we communicate, and not Awaken the suspicion of the tyrants?

STAUFF. Might we not meet at Brunnen or at Treib, Where merchant vessels with their cargoes come?

FÜRST. We must not go so openly to work.

Hear my opinion. On the lake's left bank,

As we sail hence to Brunnen, right against

The Mytenstein, deep-hidden in the wood

A meadow lies, by shepherds called the Rootli,

Because the wood has been uprooted there.

'Tis where our canton bound'ries verge on yours; —

[To MELCHTHAL.

Your boat will carry you across from Schwytz.

[To STAUFFACHER.

Thither by lonely by-paths let us wend

At midnight, and deliberate o'er our plans.

Let each bring with him there ten trusty men,

All one at heart with us; and then we may

Consult together for the general weal,

And, with God's guidance, fix what next to do.

STAUFF. So let it be. And now your true right hand!

Yours, too, young man! and as we now three men
 Among ourselves thus knit our hands together
 In all sincerity and truth, e'en so
 Shall we three cantons, too, together stand
 In victory and defeat, in life and death.

FÜRST and MELCH. In life and death.

[They hold their hands clasped together for some moments in silence.]

MELCH. Alas, my old blind father!
 The day of freedom, that thou canst not see,
 But thou shalt hear it, when from Alp to Alp
 The beacon fires throw up their flaming signs,
 And the proud castles of the tyrants fall,
 Into thy cottage shall the Switzer burst,
 Bear the glad tidings to thine ear, and o'er
 Thy darken'd way shall Freedom's radiance pour.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

The mansion of the BARON OF ATTINGHAUSEN. A Gothic Hall decorated with escutcheons and helmets. The BARON, a gray-headed man, eighty-five years old, tall and of a commanding mien, clad in a furred pelisse, and leaning on a staff tipped with chamois horn. KUONI and six hinds standing around him with rakes and scythes. ULRICH OF RUDENZ enters in the costume of a Knight.

RUD. Uncle, I'm here! Your will?

ATTING. First let me share,
 After the ancient custom of our house,
 The morning cup with these my faithful servants!

[He drinks from a cup, which is then passed around.]
 Time was, I stood myself in field and wood,

With mine own eyes directing all their toil,
 Even as my banner led them in the fight.
 Now I am only fit to play the steward:
 And, if the genial sun come not to me,
 I can no longer seek it on the hills.
 Thus slowly, in an ever narrowing sphere,
 I move on to the narrowest and the last,
 Where all life's pulses cease. I now am but
 The shadow of my former self, and that
 Is fading fast — 'twill soon be but a name.

KUONI. (*offering RUDENZ the cup*) A pledge, young
 master!

[RUDENZ *hesitates to take the cup*.
 Nay, sir, drink it off!

One cup, one heart! You know our proverb, sir?

ATTING. Go, children, and at eve, when work is done,
 We'll meet and talk the country's business over.

[*Exeunt Servants.*

Belted and plumed, and all thy bravery on!
 Thou art for Altdorf — for the castle, boy?

RUD. Yes, uncle. Longer may I not delay —

ATTING. (*sitting down*) Why in such haste? Say,
 are thy youthful hours

Doled in such niggard measure, that thou must
 Be chary of them to thy aged uncle?

RUD. I see my presence is not needed here,
 I am but as a stranger in this house.

ATTING. (*gazes fixedly at him for a considerable
 time*) Ay, pity 'tis thou art! Alas, that
 home

To thee has grown so strange! Oh, Uly! Uly!
 I scarce do know thee now, thus deck'd in silks,
 The peacock's feather¹ flaunting in thy cap,

¹ The Austrian knights were in the habit of wearing a plume of peacock's feathers in their helmets. After the overthrow of the Austrian dominion in Switzerland, it was made highly penal to wear the peacock's feather at any public assembly there.

And purple mantle round thy shoulders flung:
 Thou look'st upon the peasant with disdain;
 And tak'st his honest greeting with a blush.

RUD. All honour due to him I gladly pay,
 But must deny the right he would usurp.

ATTING. The sore displeasure of its monarch rests
 Upon our land, and every true man's heart
 Is full of sadness for the grievous wrongs
 We suffer from our tyrants. Thou alone
 Art all unmoved amid the general grief.
 Abandoning thy friends, thou tak'st thy stand
 Beside thy country's foes, and, as in scorn
 Of our distress, pursuest giddy joys,
 Courting the smiles of princes all the while
 Thy country bleeds beneath their cruel scourge.

RUD. The land is sore oppress'd, I know it, uncle.
 But why? Who plunged it into this distress?
 A word, one little easy word, might buy
 Instant deliverance from all our ills,
 And win the good will of the emperor.
 Woe unto those who seal the people's eyes,
 And made them adverse to their country's good —
 The men, who, for their own vile selfish ends,
 Are seeking to prevent the Forest States
 From swearing fealty to Austria's house,
 As all the countries round about have done.
 It fits their humour well, to take their seats
 Amid the nobles on the Herrenbank;¹
 They'll have the Kaiser for their lord, forsooth, —
 That is to say, they'll have no lord at all.

ATTING. Must I hear this, and from thy lips, rash
 boy!

RUD. You urged me to this answer. Hear me out.
 What, uncle, is the character you've stoop'd
 To fill contentedly through life? Have you
 No higher pride, than in these lonely wilds

¹ The bench reserved for the nobility.

To be the Landamman or Banneret,¹
The petty chieftain of a shepherd race ?
How ! Were it not a far more glorious choice,
To bend in homage to our royal lord,
And swell the princely splendours of his court,
Than sit at home, the peer of your own vassals,
And share the judgment-seat with vulgar clowns ?

ATTING. Ah, Uly, Uly ; all too well I see
The tempter's voice has caught thy willing ear,
And pour'd its subtle poison in thy heart.

RUD. Yes, I conceal it not. It doth offend
My inmost soul, to hear the stranger's gibes,
That taunt us with the name of "Peasant Nobles !"
Think you the heart that's stirring here can brook,
While all the young nobility around
Are reaping honour under Habsburg's banner,
That I should loiter, in inglorious ease,
Here on the heritage my fathers left,
And, in the dull routine of vulgar toil,
Lose all life's glorious spring ? In other lands
Great deeds are done. A world of fair renown
Beyond these mountains stirs in martial pomp.
My helm and shield are rusting in the hall ;
The martial trumpet's spirit-stirring blast,
The herald's call, inviting to the lists,
Rouse not the echoes of these vales, where nought
Save cowherd's horn and cattle bell is heard,
In one unvarying dull monotony.

ATTING. Deluded boy, seduced by empty show !
Despise the land that gave thee birth ! Ashamed
Of the good ancient customs of thy sires !
The day will come, when thou, with burning tears,
Wilt long for home, and for thy native hills,

¹ The Landamman was an officer chosen by the Swiss Gemeinde, or Diet, to preside over them. The Banneret was an officer entrusted with the keeping of the State Banner, and such others as were taken in battle.

And that dear melody of tuneful herds,
Which now, in proud disgust, thou dost despise !
A day when wistful pangs shall shake thy heart,
Hearing their music in a foreign land.
Oh ! potent is the spell that binds to home !
No, no, the cold, false world is not for thee.
At the proud court, with thy true heart, thou wilt
For ever feel a stranger among strangers.
The world asks virtues of far other stamp
Than thou hast learned within these simple vales.
But go — go thither, — barter thy free soul,
Take land in fief, be minion to a prince,
Where thou might'st be lord paramount, and prince
Of all thine own unburden'd heritage !
O, Uly, Uly, stay among thy people !
Go not to Altdorf. Oh, abandon not
The sacred cause of thy wrong'd native land !
I am the last of all my race. My name
Ends with me. Yonder hang my helm and shield ;
They will be buried with me in the grave.¹
And must I think, when yielding up my breath,
That thou but wait'st the closing of mine eyes,
To stoop thy knee to this new feudal court,
And take in vassalage from Austria's hands
The noble lands, which I from God received,
Free and unfetter'd as the mountain air !

RUD. 'Tis vain for us to strive against the king.
The world pertains to him : — shall we alone,
In mad presumptuous obstinacy, strive
To break that mighty chain of lands, which he
Hath drawn around us with his giant grasp.
His are the markets, his the courts, — his, too,
The highways ; nay, the very carrier's horse,
That traffics on the Gotthardt, pays him toll.

¹ According to the custom, by which, when the last male descendant of a noble family died, his sword, helmet, and shield, were buried with him.

By his dominions, as within a net,
We are enclosed, and girded round about.
— And will the empire shield us? Say, can it
Protect itself 'gainst Austria's growing power?
To God, and not to emperors must we look!
What store can on their promises be placed,
When they, to meet their own necessities,
Can pawn, and even alienate the towns
That flee for shelter 'neath the eagle's wings?¹
No, uncle! It is wise and wholesome prudence,
In times like these, when faction's all abroad,
To vow attachment to some mighty chief.
The imperial crown's transferred from line to line.²
It has no memory for faithful service:
But to secure the favour of these great
Hereditary masters, were to sow
Seeds for a future harvest.

ATTING.

Art so wise?

Wilt thou see clearer than thy noble sires,
Who battled for fair freedom's priceless gem,
With life, and fortune, and heroic arm?
Sail down the lake to Lucern, there inquire,
How Austria's thralldom weighs the cantons down.
Soon she will come to count our sheep, our cattle,
To portion out the Alps, e'en to their peaks,
And in our own free woods to hinder us
From striking down the eagle or the stag;
To set her tolls on every bridge and gate,
Impoverish us, to swell her lust of sway,
And drain our dearest blood to feed her wars.
No, if our blood must flow, let it be shed
In our own cause! We purchase liberty

¹ This frequently occurred. But in the event of an imperial city being mortgaged for the purpose of raising money, it lost its freedom, and was considered as put out of the realm.

² An allusion to the circumstance of the imperial crown not being hereditary, but conferred by election on one of the counts of the empire.

More cheaply far than bondage.

RUD.

What can we,

A shepherd race, against great Albert's hosts?

ATTING. Learn, foolish boy, to know this shepherd race!

I know them, I have led them on in fight, —

I saw them in the battle at Favenz.

What! Austria try, forsooth, to force on us

A yoke we are determined not to bear!

Oh, learn to feel from what a stock thou'rt sprung;

Cast not, for tinsel trash and idle show,

The precious jewel of thy worth away.

To be the chieftain of a free born race,

Bound to thee only by their unbought love,

Ready to stand — to fight — to die with thee,

Be that thy pride, be that thy noblest boast!

Knit to thy heart the ties of kindred — home —

Cling to the land, the dear land of thy sires,

Grapple to that with thy whole heart and soul!

Thy power is rooted deep and strongly here,

But in yon stranger world thou'lt stand alone,

A trembling reed beat down by every blast.

Oh come! 'tis long since we have seen thee, Uly!

Tarry but this one day. Only to-day!

Go not to Altdorf. Wilt thou? Not to-day!

For this one day, bestow thee on thy friends.

[*Takes his hand.*

RUD. I gave my word. Unhand me! I am bound.

ATTING. (*drops his hand and says sternly*) Bound, didst thou say? Oh, yes, unhappy boy,

Thou art indeed. But not by word or oath.

'Tis by the silken mesh of love thou'rt bound.

[*RUDENZ turns away.*

Ay, hide thee, as thou wilt. 'Tis she, I know,

Bertha of Bruneck, draws thee to the court;

'Tis she that chains thee to the emperor's service.

Thou think'st to win the noble knightly maid

By thy apostasy. Be not deceived.
She is held out before thee as a lure ;
But never meant for innocence like thine.

RUD. No more, I've heard enough. So fare you
well. [Exit.

ATTING. Stay, Uly ! Stay ! Rash boy, he's gone !
I can

Nor hold him back, nor save him from destruction.
And so the Wolfshot has deserted us ;—
Others will follow his example soon.
This foreign witchery, sweeping o'er our hills,
Tears with its potent spell our youth away.
O luckless hour, when men and manners strange
Into these calm and happy valleys came,
To warp our primitive and guileless ways.
The new is pressing on with might. The old,
The good, the simple, all fleet fast away.
New times come on. A race is springing up,
That think not as their fathers thought before !
What do I hear ? All, all are in the grave
With whom erewhile I moved, and held converse ;
My age has long been laid beneath the sod :
Happy the man, who may not live to see
What shall be done by those that follow me !

SCENE II.

A meadow surrounded by high rocks and wooded ground. On the rocks are tracks, with rails and ladders, by which the peasants are afterward seen descending. In the background the lake is observed, and over it a moon rainbow in the early part of the scene. The prospect is closed by lofty mountains, with glaciers rising behind them. The stage is dark, but the lake and glaciers glisten in the moonlight.

MELCHTHAL, BAUMGARTEN, WINKELRIED, MEYER VON SARNEN, BURKHART AM BUHEL, ARNOLD VON SEWA, KLAUS VON DER FLUE, and four other peasants, all armed.

MELCH. (*behind the scenes*) The mountain pass is open. Follow me!

I see the rock, and little cross upon it :
This is the spot ; here is the Rootli.

[*They enter with torches.*
Hark!

WINK.

SEWA. The coast is clear.

MEYER. None of our comrades come?

We are the first, we Unterwaldeners.

MELCH. How far is't i' the night?

BAUM. The beacon watch
Upon the Selisberg has just called two.

[*A bell is heard at a distance.*

MEYER. Hush! Hark!

BUHEL. The forest chapel's matin bell
Chimes clearly o'er the lake from Switzerland.

VON F. The air is clear, and bears the sound so far.

MELCH. Go, you and you, and light some broken boughs,

Let's bid them welcome with a cheerful blaze.

[*Two peasants exeunt.*

SEWA. The moon shines fair to-night. Beneath its beams

The lake reposes, bright as burnish'd steel.

BUHEL. They'll have an easy passage.

WINK. (*pointing to the lake*) Ha! look there!
Do you see nothing?

MEYER. Ay, indeed, I do!

A rainbow in the middle of the night.

MELCH. Formed by the bright reflection of the moon!

VON F. A sign most strange and wonderful, indeed!
Many there be, who ne'er have seen the like.

SEWA. 'Tis doubled, see, a paler one above!

BAUM. A boat is gliding yonder right beneath it.

MELCH. That must be Werner Stauffacher! I knew
The worthy patriot would not tarry long.

[*Goes with BAUMGARTEN toward the shore.*]

MEYER. The Uri men are like to be the last.

BUHEL. They're forced to take a winding circuit
through

The mountains; for the viceroy's spies are out.

[*In the meanwhile the two peasants have kindled a fire in the centre of the stage.*]

MELCH. (*on the shore*) Who's there? The word?

STAUFF. (*from below*) Friends of the country.

[*All retire up the stage, toward the party landing from the boat. Enter STAUFFACHER, ITEL REDING, HANS AUF DER MAUER, JORG IM HOF, CONRAD HUNN, ULRICH DER SCHMIDT, JOST VON WEILER, and three other peasants, armed.*]

ALL. Welcome!

[*While the rest remain behind exchanging greetings, MELCHTHAL comes forward with STAUFFACHER.*]

MELCH. Oh, worthy Stauffacher, I've look'd but now
On him who could not look on me again.

I've laid my hands upon his rayless eyes,
And on their vacant orbits sworn a vow
Of vengeance, only to be cool'd in blood.

STAUFF. Speak not of vengeance. We are here to
meet

The threatened evil, not to avenge the past.
Now tell me what you've done, and what secured
To aid the common cause in Unterwald.
How stand the peasantry disposed, and how
Yourself escaped the wiles of treachery?

MELCH. Through the Surenen's fearful mountain
chain,

Where dreary ice-fields stretch on every side,
And sound is none, save the hoarse vulture's cry,
I reach'd the Alpine pasture, where the herds
From Uri and from Engelberg resort,
And turn their cattle forth to graze in common.
Still as I went along, I slaked my thirst
With the coarse oozings of the glacier heights
That thro' the crevices come foaming down,
And turned to rest me in the herdsmen's cots,¹
Where I was host and guest, until I gain'd
The cheerful homes and social haunts of men.
Already through these distant vales had spread
The rumour of this last atrocity;
And wheresoe'er I went, at every door,
Kind words saluted me and gentle looks.
I found these simple spirits all in arms
Against our rulers' tyrannous encroachments.
For as their Alps through each succeeding year
Yield the same roots, — their streams flow ever on
In the same channels, — nay, the clouds and winds
The selfsame course unalterably pursue,

¹These are the cots, or shealings, erected by the herdsmen for shelter, while pasturing their herds on the mountains during the summer. These are left deserted in winter, during which period Melchthal's journey was taken.

So have old customs there, from sire to son,
Been handed down, unchanging and unchanged;
Nor will they brook to swerve or turn aside
From the fixed even tenor of their life.
With grasp of their hard hands they welcomed me, —
Took from the walls their rusty falchions down, —
And from their eyes the soul of valour flash'd
With joyful lustre, as I spoke those names
Sacred to every peasant in the mountains,
Your own and Walter Fürst's. Whate'er your voice
Should dictate as the right, they swore to do;
And you they swore to follow e'en to death.
— So sped I on from house to house, secure
In the guest's sacred privilege; — and when
I reached at last the valley of my home,
Where dwell my kinsmen, scatter'd far and near —
And when I found my father, stript and blind,
Upon the stranger's straw, fed by the alms
Of charity —

STAUFF. Great Heaven !

MELCH. Yet wept I not !

No — not in weak and unavailing tears
Spent I the force of my fierce burning anguish;
Deep in my bosom, like some precious treasure,
I lock'd it fast, and thought on deeds alone.
Through every winding of the hills I crept, —
No valley so remote but I explored it;
Nay, at the very glacier's ice-clad base,
I sought and found the homes of living men;
And still, where'er my wandering footsteps turn'd,
The selfsame hatred of these tyrants met me.
For even there, at vegetation's verge,
Where the numb'd earth is barren of all fruits,
Their grasping hands had been for plunder thrust.
Into the hearts of all this honest race,
The story of my wrongs struck deep, and now
They, to a man, are ours; both heart and hand,

STAUFF. Great things, indeed, you've wrought in little time.

MELCH. I did still more than this. The fortresses, Rossberg and Sarnen, are the country's dread ;
For from behind their adamantine walls
The foe, like eagle from his eyrie, swoops,
And, safe himself, spreads havoc o'er the land.
With my own eyes I wish'd to weigh its strength,
So went to Sarnen, and explored the castle.

STAUFF. How ! Venture even into the tiger's den ?

MELCH. Disguised in pilgrim's weeds I entered it ;
I saw the viceroy feasting at his board —
Judge if I'm master of myself or no !
I saw the tyrant, and I slew him not !

STAUFF. Fortune, indeed, upon your boldness smiled.

[Meanwhile the others have arrived and join

MELCHTHAL and STAUFFACHER.

Yet tell me now, I pray, who are the friends,
The worthy men, who came along with you ?
Make me acquainted with them, that we may
Speak frankly, man to man, and heart to heart.

MEYER. In the three cantons, who, sir, knows not you ?

Meyer of Sarnen is my name ; and this
Is Struth of Winkelried, my sister's son.

STAUFF. No unknown name. A Winkelried it was

Who slew the dragon in the fen at Weiler,
And lost his life in the encounter, too.

WINK. That, Master Stauffacher, was my grandfather.

MELCH. *(pointing to two peasants)* These two are men who till the cloister lands
Of Engelberg, and live behind the forest.
You'll not think ill of them because they're serfs,
And sit not free upon the soil, like us.
They love the land, and bear a good repute.

STAUFF. (*to them*) Give me your hands. He has
good cause for thanks,
That to no man his body's service owes.
But worth is worth, no matter where 'tis found.

HUNN. That is Herr Reding, sir, our old Landam-
man.

MEYER. I know him well. I am at law with him
About a piece of ancient heritage.
Herr Reding, we are enemies in court,
Here we are one. [*Shakes his hand.*]

STAUFF. That's well and bravely said.

WINK. Listen! They come. The horn of Uri!
Hark!

[*On the right and left armed men are seen descend-
ing the rocks with torches.*]

MAUER. Look, is not that the holy man of God?
A worthy priest! The terrors of the night,
And the way's pains and perils scare not him,
A faithful shepherd caring for his flock.

BAUM. The sacrist follows him, and Walter Fürst.
But where is Tell? I do not see him there.

[*WALTER FÜRST, RÖSSELMANN the Pastor, PETER-
MANN the Sacrist, KUONI the Shepherd, WERNI
the Huntsman, RUODI the Fisherman, and five
other countrymen, thirty-three in all, advance
and take their places round the fire.*]

FÜRST. Thus must we, on the soil our fathers left us,
Creep forth by stealth to meet like murderers,
And in the night, that should her mantle lend
Only to crime and black conspiracy,
Assert our own good rights, which yet are clear
As is the radiance of the noonday sun.

MELCH. So be it. What is hatch'd in gloom of
night
Shall free and boldly meet the morning light.

RÖSSEL. Confederates! Listen to the words which
God

Inspires my heart withal. Here we are met
 To represent the general weal. In us
 Are all the people of the land convened.
 Then let us hold the Diet, as of old,
 And as we're wont in peaceful times to do.
 The time's necessity be our excuse,
 If there be aught informal in this meeting.
 Still, wheresoe'er men strike for justice, there
 Is God, and now beneath his heav'n we stand.

STAUFF. 'Tis well advised. — Let us, then, hold the
 Diet

According to our ancient usages. —

Though it be night, there's sunshine in our cause.

MELCH. Few though our numbers be, the hearts
 are here

Of the whole people; here the BEST are met.

HUNN. The ancient books may not be near at hand,
 Yet are they graven in our inmost hearts.

RÖSSEL. 'Tis well. And now, then, let a ring be
 formed,

And plant the swords of power within the ground.¹

MAUER. Let the Landamman step into his place,
 And by his side his secretaries stand.

SACRIST. There are three cantons here. Which
 hath the right

To give the head to the united council?

MELCH. Schwytz may contest that dignity with Uri.
 We Unterwald'ners enter not the field,
 We stand aside. We are but suppliants here,
 Invoking aid from our more potent friends.

STAUFF. Let Uri have the sword. Her banner takes,
 In battle, the precedence of our own.

FÜRST. Schwytz, then, must share the honour of
 the sword;

¹ It was the custom at the meetings of the Landes Gemeinde, or Diet, to set swords upright in the ground as emblems of authority.

For she's the honoured ancestor of all.

RÖSSEL. Let me arrange this generous controversy.
Uri shall lead in battle — Schwytz in council.

FÜRST (*gives STAUFFACHER his hand*) Then take
your place.

STAUFF. Not I. Some older man.

HOFE. Ulrich, the smith, is the most aged here.

MAUER. A worthy man, but not a freeman; no!
— No bondman can be judge in Switzerland.

STAUFF. Is not Herr Reding here, our old Landam-
man?

Where can we find a worthier man than he?

FÜRST. Let him be Amman and the Diet's chief!
You that agree with me, hold up your hands!

[*All hold up their right hands.*]

REDING. (*stepping into the centre*) I cannot lay my
hands upon the books;

But by yon everlasting stars I swear

Never to swerve from justice and the right.

[*The two swords are placed before him, and a
circle formed; Schwytz in the centre, Uri on
his right, Unterwald on his left.*]

REDING. (*resting on his battle sword*) Why, at the
hour when spirits walk the earth,

Meet the three cantons of the mountains here,

Upon the lake's inhospitable shore?

What may the purport be of this new league

We here contract beneath the starry heaven?

STAUFF. (*entering the circle*) 'Tis no new league
that here we now contract,

But one our fathers framed, in ancient times,

We purpose to renew! For know, confederates,

Though mountain ridge and lake divide our bounds,

And each canton by its own laws is ruled,

Yet are we but one race, born of one blood,

And all are children of one common home.

WINK. Is then the burden of our legends true,

That we came hither from a distant land ?
Oh, tell us what you know, that our new league
May reap fresh vigour from the leagues of old.

STAUFF. Hear, then, what aged herdsmen tell
There dwelt

A mighty people in the land that lies
Back to the north. The scourge of famine came :
And in this strait 'twas publicly resolved
That each tenth man, on whom the lot might fall,
Should leave the country. They obey'd — and forth,
With loud lamentings, men and women went,
A mighty host ; and to the south moved on,
Cutting their way through Germany by the sword,
Until they gained these pine-clad hills of ours ;
Nor stopp'd they ever on their forward course,
Till at the shaggy dell they halted, where
The Mûta flows through its luxuriant meads.
No trace of human creature met their eye,
Save one poor hut upon the desert shore,
Where dwelt a lonely man, and kept the ferry.
A tempest raged — the lake rose mountains high
And barr'd their further progress. Thereupon
They view'd the country — found it rich in wood,
Discover'd goodly springs, and felt as they
Were in their own dear native land once more.
Then they resolved to settle on the spot ;
Erected there the ancient town of Schwytz :
And many a day of toil had they to clear
The tangled brake and forest's spreading roots.
Meanwhile their numbers grew, the soil became
Unequal to sustain them, and they cross'd
To the black mountain, far as Weissland, where,
Conceal'd behind eternal walls of ice,
Another people speak another tongue.
They built the village Stanz, beside the Kernwald ;
The village Altdorf, in the vale of Reuss ;
Yet, ever mindful of their parent stem,

The men of Schwytz, from all the stranger race,
That since that time have settled in the land,
Each other recognise. Their hearts still know,
And beat fraternally to kindred blood.

[*Extends his hand right and left.*]

MAUER. Ay, we are all one heart, one blood, one race!

ALL. (*joining hands*) We are one people, and will act as one.

STAUFF. The nations round us bear a foreign yoke;
For they have to the conqueror succumbed.
Nay, e'en within our frontiers may be found
Some, that owe villed service to a lord,
A race of bonded serfs from sire to son.
But we, the genuine race of ancient Swiss,
Have kept our freedom from the first till now.
Never to princes have we bow'd the knee;
Freely we sought protection of the empire.

RÖSSEL. Freely we sought it — freely it was given.
'Tis so set down in Emperor Frederick's charter.

STAUFF. For the most free have still some feudal lord.
There must be still a chief, a judge supreme,
To whom appeal may lie, in case of strife.
And therefore was it, that our sires allow'd,
For what they had recover'd from the waste,
This honour to the emperor, the lord
Of all the German and Italian soil;
And, like the other free men of his realm,
Engaged to aid him with their swords in war;
The free man's duty this alone should be,
To guard the empire that keeps guard for him.

MELCH. He's but a slave that would acknowledge more.

STAUFF. They followed, when the Heribann¹ went forth,

¹ The Heribann was a muster of warriors similar to the *arrière ban* of France.

The imperial standard, and they fought its battles !
To Italy they march'd in arms, to place
The Cæsars' crown upon the emperor's head.
But still at home they ruled themselves in peace,
By their own laws and ancient usages.
The emperor's only right was to adjudge
The penalty of death ; he therefore named
Some mighty noble as his delegate,
That had no stake or interest in the land,
Who was call'd in, when doom was to be pass'd,
And, in the face of day, pronounced decree,
Clear and distinctly, fearing no man's hate.
What traces here, that we are bondsmen ? Speak,
If there be any can gainsay my words !

HOFE. No ! You have spoken but the simple
truth ;

We never stoop'd beneath a tyrant's yoke.

STAUFF. Even to the emperor we did not sub-
mit,

When he gave judgment 'gainst us for the Church ;
For when the Abbey of Einsiedlen claimed
The Alp our fathers and ourselves had grazed,
And showed an ancient charter, which bestowed
The land on them as being ownerless —
For our existence there had been concealed —
What was our answer ? This. " The grant is void.
No emperor can bestow what is our own :
And if the empire shall deny our rights,
We can, within our mountains, right ourselves !"
Thus spake our fathers ! And shall we endure
The shame and infamy of this new yoke,
And from the vassal brook what never king
Dared, in his plenitude of power, attempt ?
This soil we have created for ourselves
By the hard labour of our hands ; we've changed
The giant forest, that was erst the haunt
Of savage bears, into a home for man ;

Extirpated the dragon's brood, that wont
To rise, distent with venom, from the swamps;
Rent the thick misty canopy that hung
Its blighting vapours on the dreary waste;
Blasted the solid rock; across the chasm
Thrown the firm bridge for the wayfaring man.
By the possession of a thousand years
The soil is ours. And shall an alien lord,
Himself a vassal, dare to venture here,
Insult us by our own hearth fires, — attempt
To forge the chains of bondage for our hands,
And do us shame on our own proper soil?
Is there no help against such wrong as this?

[*Great sensation among the people*]

Yes! there's a limit to the despot's power!
When the oppress'd for justice looks in vain,
When his sore burden may no more be borne,
With fearless heart he makes appeal to Heaven,
And thence brings down his everlasting rights,
Which there abide, inalienably his,
And indestructible as are the stars.
Nature's primeval state returns again,
Where man stands hostile to his fellow man;
And if all other means shall fail his need,
One last resource remains — his own good sword.
Our dearest treasures call to us for aid,
Against the oppressor's violence; we stand
For country, home, for wives, for children here!

ALL. (*clashing their swords*) Here stand we for our
homes, our wives, and children.

RÖSSEL. (*stepping into the circle*) Bethink ye well
before ye draw the sword.

Some peaceful compromise may yet be made;
Speak but one word, and at your feet you'll see
The men who now oppress you. Take the terms
That have been often tendered you; renounce
The empire, and to Austria swear allegiance!

MAUER. What says the priest? To Austria allegiance?

BUHEL. Hearken not to him!

WINK. 'Tis a traitor's counsel,
His country's foe!

REDING. Peace, peace, confederates!

SEWA. Homage to Austria, after wrongs like these!

FLUE. Shall Austria extort from us by force
What we denied to kindness and entreaty?

MEYER. Then should we all be slaves, deservedly.

MAUER. Yes! Let him forfeit all a Switzer's rights
Who talks of yielding thus to Austria's yoke!
I stand on this, Landamman. Let this be
The foremost of our laws!

MELCH. Even so! Whoe'er
Shall talk of bearing Austria's yoke, let him
Of all his rights and honours be despoiled,
No man thenceforth receive him at his hearth!

ALL. (*raising their right hands*) Agreed! Be this
the law!

REDING. (*after a pause*) The law it is.

RÖSSEL. Now you are free — this law hath made
you free.

Never shall Austria obtain by force
What she has fail'd to gain by friendly suit.

WEIL. On with the order of the day! Proceed!

REDING. Confederates! Have all gentler means
been tried?

Perchance the emp'ror knows not of our wrongs,
It may not be his will we suffer thus:

Were it not well to make one last attempt,
And lay our grievances before the throne,
Ere we unsheathe the sword? Force is at best
A fearful thing e'en in a righteous cause;
God only helps, when man can help no more.

STAUFF. (*to KONRAD HUNN*) Here you can give us
information. Speak!

HUNN. I was at Rheinfeld, at the emperor's court,
Deputed by the cantons to complain
Of the oppressions of these governors,
And of our liberties the charter claim,
Which each new king till now has ratified.
I found the envoys there of many a town,
From Suabia and the valley of the Rhine,
Who all received their parchments as they wish'd,
And straight went home again with merry heart.
But me, your envoy, they to the council sent,
Where I with empty cheer was soon dismiss'd.
"The emperor at present was engaged;
Some other time he would attend to us!"
I turn'd away, and passing through the hall,
With heavy heart, in a recess I saw
The Grand Duke John¹ in tears, and by his side
The noble lords of Wart and Tegerfeld,
Who beckon'd me, and said, "Redress yourselves.
Expect not justice from the emperor.
Does he not plunder his own brother's child,
And keep from him his just inheritance?"
The duke claims his maternal property,
Urging he's now of age, and 'tis full time,
That he should rule his people and estates;
What is the answer made to him? The king
Places a chaplet on his head; "Behold
The fitting ornament," he cries, "of youth!"

MAUER. You hear. Expect not from the emperor
Or right or justice! Then redress yourselves!

REDING. No other course is left us. Now, advise
What plan most likely to ensure success.

FÜRST. To shake a thralldom off that we abhor,
To keep our ancient rights inviolate,
As we received them from our fathers, -- this,
Not lawless innovation, is our aim.

¹The Duke of Suabia, who soon afterward assassinated his uncle, for withholding his patrimony from him.

Let Cæsar still retain what is his due :
And he that is a vassal, let him pay
The service he is sworn to faithfully.

MEYER. I hold my land of Austria in fief.

FÜRST. Continue, then, to pay your feudal dues.

WEIL. I'm tenant of the lords of Rapperswil.

FÜRST. Continue, then, to pay them rent and tithe.

RÖSSEL. Of Zurich's abbess humble vassal I.

FÜRST. Give to the cloister what the cloister claims.

STAUFF. The empire only is my feudal lord.

FÜRST. What needs must be, we'll do, but nothing
more.

We'll drive these tyrants and their minions hence,
And raze their towering strongholds to the ground,
Yet shed, if possible, no drop of blood.

Let the emperor see that we were driven to cast
The sacred duties of respect away ;
And when he finds we keep within our bounds,
His wrath, belike, may yield to policy ;
For truly is that nation to be fear'd,
That, arms in hand, is temperate in its wrath.

REDING. But prithee tell us how may this be done ?
The enemy is arm'd as well as we,
And, rest assured, he will not yield in peace.

STAUFF. He will, whene'er he sees us up in arms ;
We shall surprise him ere he is prepared.

MEYER. Easily said, but not so easily done.
Two strongholds dominate the country — they
Protect the foe, and should the king invade us,
Our task would then be dangerous indeed.
Rossberg and Sarnen both must be secured,
Before a sword is drawn in either canton.

STAUFF. Should we delay, the foe would soon be
warned ;
We are too numerous for secrecy.

MEYER. There is no traitor in the Forest States.

RÖSSEL. But even zeal may heedlessly betray.

FÜRST. Delay it longer, and the keep at Altdorf
Will be complete, — the governor secure.

MEYER. You think but of ourselves.

SACRIST. You are unjust!

MEYER. Unjust! said you? Dares Uri taunt us
so?

REDING. Peace, on your oath!

SACRIST. If Schwytz be leagued with Uri,
Why, then, indeed, we must perforce be dumb.

REDING. And let me tell you, in the Diet's name,
Your hasty spirit much disturbs the peace.
Stand we not all for the same common cause?

WINK. What if till Christmas we delay? 'Tis
then

The custom for the serfs to throng the castle,
Bringing the governor their annual gifts.
Thus may some ten or twelve selected men
Assemble unobserved, within its walls,
Bearing about their persons pikes of steel,
Which may be quickly mounted upon staves,
For arms are not admitted to the fort.
The rest can fill the neighb'ring wood, prepared
To sally forth upon a trumpet's blast,
Soon as their comrades have secured the gate;
And thus the castle will with ease be ours.

MELCH. The Rossberg I will undertake to scale.
I have a sweetheart in the garrison,
Whom with some tender words I could persuade
To lower me at night a hempen ladder.
Once up, my friends will not be long behind.

REDING. Are all resolved in favour of delay?

[*The majority raise their hands.*]

STAUFF. (*counting them*) Twenty to twelve is the
majority.

FÜRST. If on the appointed day the castles fall,
From mountain on to mountain we shall speed
The fiery signal: in the capital

Of every canton quickly rouse the Landsturm.¹
 Then, when these tyrants see our martial front,
 Believe me, they will never make so bold
 As risk the conflict, but will gladly take
 Safe conduct forth beyond our boundaries.

STAUFF. Not so with Gessler. He will make a stand.

Surrounded with his dread array of horse,
 Blood will be shed before he quits the field,
 And even expell'd he'd still be terrible.
 'Tis hard, nay, dangerous, to spare his life.

BAUM. Place me where'er a life is to be lost;
 I owe my life to Tell, and cheerfully
 Will pledge it for my country. I have clear'd
 My honour, and my heart is now at rest.

REDING. Counsel will come with circumstance. Be patient!

Something must still be to the moment left.
 Yet, while by night we hold our Diet here,
 The morning, see, has on the mountain tops
 Kindled her glowing beacon. Let us part,
 Ere the broad sun surprise us.

FÜRST. Do not fear.

The night wanes slowly from these vales of ours.

✓ *[All have involuntarily taken off their caps, and contemplate the breaking of day, absorbed in silence.]*

RÖSSEL. By this fair light which greeteth us before

Those other nations, that, beneath us far,
 In noisome cities pent, draw painful breath,
 Swear we the oath of our confederacy!
 A band of brothers true we swear to be,
 Never to part in danger or in death!

[They repeat his words with three fingers raised.]

We swear we will be free, as were our sires,

¹ A sort of national militia.

And sooner die than live in slavery !

[All repeat as before.]

We swear to put our trust in God Most High,

And not to quail before the might of man !

[All repeat as before, and embrace each other.]

STAUFF. Now every man pursue his several way

Back to his friends, his kindred, and his home.

Let the herd winter up his flock, and gain

In secret friends for this great league of ours !

What for a time must be endured, endure,

And let the reckoning of the tyrants grow,

Till the great day arrive, when they shall pay

The general and particular debt at once.

Let every man control his own just rage,

And nurse his vengeance for the public wrongs :

For he whom selfish interests now engage,

Defrauds the general weal of what to it belongs.

[As they are going off in profound silence, in three different directions, the orchestra plays a solemn air. The empty scene remains open for some time, showing the rays of the sun rising over the glaciers.]

ACT III.

SCENE I.

Court before TELL'S house. TELL with an axe. HEDWIG engaged in her domestic duties. WALTER and WILHELM in the background, playing with a little cross-bow.

(WALTER sings).

With his cross-bow, and his quiver,

The huntsman speeds his way,

Over mountain, dale, and river,

At the dawning of the day.
 As the eagle, on wild pinion,
 Is the king in realms of air,
 So the hunter claims dominion
 Over crag and forest lair.

Far as ever bow can carry,
 Thro' the trackless airy space,
 All he sees he makes his quarry,
 Soaring bird and beast of chase.

WILH. (*runs forward*) My string has snapt! Oh,
 father, mend it, do!

TELL. Not I; a true-born archer helps himself.
[Boys retire.]

HEDW. The boys begin to use the bow betimes.

TELL. 'Tis early practice only makes the master.

HEDW. Ah! Would to heaven they never learnt
 the art!

TELL. But they shall learn it, wife, in all its points.
 Whoe'er would carve an independent way
 Through life, must learn to ward or plant a blow.

HEDW. Alas, alas! and they will never rest
 Contentedly at home.

TELL. No more can I!
 I was not framed by nature for a shepherd.
 My restless spirit ever yearns for change;
 I only feel the flush and joy of life,
 If I can start fresh quarry every day.

HEDW. Heedless the while of all your wife's
 alarms,

As she sits watching through long hours at home.
 For my soul sinks with terror at the tales
 The servants tell about the risks you run.
 Whene'er we part, my trembling heart forbodes
 That you will ne'er come back to me again.
 I see you on the frozen mountain steeps,
 Missing, perchance, your leap from crag to crag.
 I see the chamois, with a wild rebound,

Drag you down with him o'er the precipice.
 I see the avalanche close o'er your head, —
 The treacherous ice give way, and you sink down
 Intombed alive within its hideous gulf.

Ah ! in a hundred varying forms does death
 Pursue the Alpine huntsman on his course.
 That way of life can surely ne'er be blessed,
 Where life and limb are perill'd every hour.

TELL. The man that bears a quick and steady eye,
 And trusts in God, and his own lusty thews,
 Passes, with scarce a scar, through every danger.
 The mountain cannot awe the mountain child.

[*Having finished his work he lays aside his tools.*
 And now, methinks, the door will hold awhile, —
 Axe in the house oft saves the carpenter.

[*Takes his cap.*

HEDW. Whither away ?

TELL. To Altdorf, to your father.

HEDW. You have some dangerous enterprise in
 view ?

Confess !

TELL. Why think you so ?

HEDW. Some scheme's on foot
 Against the governors. There was a Diet
 Held on the Rootli — that I know — and you
 Are one of the confederacy, I'm sure.

TELL. I was not there. Yet will I not hold back,
 Whene'er my country calls me to her aid.

HEDW. Wherever danger is, will you be placed.
 On you, as ever, will the burden fall.

TELL. Each man shall have the post that fits his
 powers.

HEDW. You took — ay, 'mid the thickest of the
 storm —

The man of Unterwald across the lake.
 'Tis marvel you escaped. Had you no thought
 Of wife and children, then ?

- TELL. Dear wife, I had ;
And therefore saved the father for his children.
- HEDW. To brave the lake in all its wrath ! 'Twas not
To put your trust in God ! 'Twas tempting him.
- TELL. Little will he that's over cautious do.
- HEDW. Yes, you've a kind and helping hand for all ;
But be in straits, and who will lend you aid ?
- TELL. God grant I ne'er may stand in need of it !
[*Takes up his crossbow and arrows.*]
- HEDW. Why take your crossbow with you ? leave
it here.
- TELL. I want my right hand, when I want my bow.
[*The boys return.*]
- WALT. Where, father, are you going ?
- TELL. To grand-dad, boy —
To Altdorf. Will you go ?
- WALT. Ay, that I will !
- HEDW. The viceroy's there just now. Go not to
Altdorf !
- TELL. He leaves to-day.
- HEDW. Then let him first begone,
Cross not his path. — You know he bears us grudge.
- TELL. His ill-will cannot greatly injure me.
I do what's right, and care for no man's hate.
- HEDW. 'Tis those who do what's right, whom most
he hates.
- TELL. Because he cannot reach them. Me, I ween,
His knightship will be glad to leave in peace.
- HEDW. Ay ! — Are you sure of that ?
- TELL. Not long ago,
As I was hunting through the wild ravines
Of Shechenthal, untrod by mortal foot, —
There, as I took my solitary way
Along a shelving ledge of rocks, where 'twas
Impossible to step on either side ;
For high above rose, like a giant wall,
The precipice's side, and far below

The Shechen thunder'd o'er its rifted bed ; —

[*The boys press toward him, looking upon him with excited curiosity.*]

There, face to face, I met the viceroy. He

Alone with me — and I myself alone —

Mere man to man, and near us the abyss,

And when his lordship had perused my face,

And knew the man he had severely fined

On some most trivial ground, not long before,

And saw me, with my sturdy bow in hand,

Come striding toward him, his cheek grew pale,

His knees refused their office, and I thought

He would have sunk against the mountainside.

Then, touch'd with pity for him, I advanced,

Respectfully, and said, " 'Tis I, my lord."

But ne'er a sound could he compel his lips

To frame in answer. Only with his hand

He beckoned me in silence to proceed.

So I pass'd on, and sent his train to seek him.

HEDW. He trembl'd, then, before you? Woe the
while

You saw his weakness; that he'll ne'er forgive.

TELL. I shun him, therefore, and he'll not seek me.

HEDW. But stay away to-day. Go hunt instead!

TELL. What do you fear?

HEDW. I am uneasy. Stay!

TELL. Why thus distress yourself without a cause?

HEDW. Because there is no cause. Tell, Tell! Stay
here!

TELL. Dear wife, I gave my promise I would go.

HEDW. Must you, — then go. But leave the boys
with me.

WALT. No, mother dear, I go with father, I.

HEDW. How, Walter! will you leave your mother
then?

WALT. I'll bring you pretty things from grandpapa.
[*Exit with his father.*]

WILH. Mother, I'll stay with you !

HEDW. (*embracing him*) Yes, yes ! thou art
My own dear child. Thou'rt all that's left to me.

[*She goes to the gate of the court and looks anxiously after TELL and her son for a considerable time.*]

SCENE II.

A retired part of the Forest. — Brooks dashing in spray over the rocks.

Enter BERTHA in a hunting dress. Immediately afterward RUDENZ.

BERTH. He follows me. Now, then, to speak my mind !

RUD. (*entering hastily*) At length, dear lady, we have met alone.

In this wild dell, with rocks on every side,
No jealous eye can watch our interview.
Now let my heart throw off this weary silencē.

BERTH. But are you sure they will not follow us ?

RUD. See, yonder goes the chase ! Now, then, or never !

I must avail me of this precious chance ! —
Must hear my doom decided by thy lips,
Though it should part me from thy side for ever.
Oh, do not arm that gentle face of thine
With looks so stern and harsh ! Who — who am I,
That dare aspire so high as unto thee ?
Fame hath not stamp'd me yet ; nor may I take
My place amid the courtly throng of knights,
That, crown'd with glory's lustre, woo thy smiles.
Nothing have I to offer, but a heart
That overflows with truth and love for thee.

BERTH. (*sternly and with severity*) And dare you
speak to me of love — of truth?

You, that are faithless to your nearest ties!
You, that are Austria's slave — bartered and sold
To her — an alien, and your country's tyrant!

RUD. How! This reproach from thee! Whom do
I seek,

On Austria's side, my own beloved, but thee?

BERTH. Think you to find me in the traitor's ranks?
Now, as I live, I'd rather give my hand
To Gessler's self, all despot though he be,
Than to the Switzer who forgets his birth,
And stoops to be a tyrant's servile tool.

RUD. Oh, heaven, what words are these?

BERTH. Say! what can lie
Nearer the good man's heart than friends and kindred?
What dearer duty to a noble soul,
Than to protect weak suffering innocence,
And vindicate the rights of the oppress'd?
My very soul bleeds for your countrymen.
I suffer with them, for I needs must love them;
They are so gentle, yet so full of power;
They draw my whole heart to them, Every day
I look upon them with increased esteem.
But you, whom nature and your knightly vow
Have given them as their natural protector,
Yet who desert them and abet their foes
In forging shackles for your native land,
You — you incense and wound me to the core.
It tries me to the utmost not to hate you.

RUD. Is not my country's welfare all my wish?
What seek I for her but to purchase peace
'Neath Austria's potent sceptre?

BERTH. Bondage, rather!
You would drive freedom from the last stronghold
That yet remains for her upon the earth.
The people know their own true int'rests better:

Their simple natures are not warp'd by show.
But round your head a tangling net is wound.

RUD. Bertha, you hate me — you despise me !

BERTH.

Nay !

And if I did, 'twere better for my peace.
But to see him despised and despicable, —
The man whom one might love —

RUD.

Oh, Bertha ! You

Show me the pinnacle of heavenly bliss,
Then, in a moment, hurl me to despair !

BERTH. No, no ! the noble is not all extinct
Within you. It but slumbers, — I will rouse it.
It must have cost you many a fiery struggle
To crush the virtues of your race within you.
But, Heaven be praised, 'tis mightier than yourself,
And you are noble in your own despite !

RUD. You trust me, then ? Oh, Bertha, with thy
love

What might I not become !

BERTH.

Be only that

For which your own high nature destin'd you.
Fill the position you were born to fill ; —
Stand by your people and your native land —
And battle for your sacred rights !

RUD.

Alas !

How can I win you — how can you be mine,
If I take arms against the emperor ?
Will not your potent kinsmen interpose,
To dictate the disposal of your hand ?

BERTH. All my estates lie in the forest cantons ;
And I am free, when Switzerland is free.

RUD. Oh ! what a prospect, Bertha, hast thou shown
me !

BERTH. Hope not to win my hand by Austria's
grace ;

Fain would they lay their grasp on my estates,
To swell the vast domains which now they hold.

The selfsame lust of conquest, that would rob
You of your liberty, endangers mine.
Oh, friend, I'm mark'd for sacrifice ; — to be
The guerdon of some parasite, perchance !
They'll drag me hence to the imperial court,
That hateful haunt of falsehood and intrigue,
And marriage bonds I loathe await me there.
Love, love alone, — your love can rescue me.

RUD. And thou couldst be content, love, to live
here ;

In my own native land to be my own ?
Oh, Bertha, all the yearnings of my soul
For this great world and its tumultuous strife,
What were they, but a yearning after thee ?
In glory's path I sought for thee alone,
And all my thirst of fame was only love.
But if in this calm vale thou canst abide
With me, and bid earth's pomps and pride adieu,
Then is the goal of my ambition won ;
And the rough tide of the tempestuous world
May dash and rave around these firm-set hills !
No wandering wishes more have I to send
Forth to the busy scene that stirs beyond.
Then may these rocks, that girdle us, extend
Their giant walls impenetrably round,
And this sequestered happy vale alone
Look up to heaven, and be my paradise !

BERTH. Now art thou all my fancy dream'd of thee.
My trust has not been given to thee in vain.

RUD. Away, ye idle phantoms of my folly ;
In mine own home I'll find my happiness.
Here, where the gladsome boy to manhood grew,
Where ev'ry brook, and tree, and mountain peak,
Teems with remembrances of happy hours,
In mine own native land thou wilt be mine.
Ah, I have ever loved it well, I feel
How poor without it were all earthly joys.

BERTH. Where should we look for happiness on earth,
If not in this dear land of innocence?
Here, where old truth hath its familiar home,
Where fraud and guile are strangers, envy ne'er
Shall dim the sparkling fountain of our bliss,
And ever bright the hours shall o'er us glide.
There do I see thee, in true manly worth,
The foremost of the free and of thy peers,
Revered with homage pure and unconstrain'd,
Wielding a power that kings might envy thee.

RUD. And thee I see, thy sex's crowning gem,
With thy sweet woman's grace and wakeful love,
Building a heaven for me within my home,
And, as the springtime scatters forth her flowers,
Adorning with thy charms my path of life,
And spreading joy and sunshine all around.

BERTH. And this it was, dear friend, that caused
my grief,
To see thee blast this life's supremest bliss
With thine own hand. Ah! what had been my fate,
Had I been forced to follow some proud lord,
Some ruthless despot, to his gloomy keep!
Here are no keeps, here are no bastion'd walls
To part me from a people I can bless.

RUD. Yet how to free myself; to loose the coils
Which I have madly twined around my head?

BERTH. Tear them asunder with a man's resolve.
Whate'er ensue, firm by thy people stand!
It is thy post by birth.

[*Hunting-horns are heard in the distance.*

But hark! The chase!

Farewell, — 'tis needful we should part — away!
Fight for thy land; thou fightest for thy love.
One foe fills all our souls with dread; the blow
That makes one free, emancipates us all.

[*Exeunt severally.*

SCENE III.

A meadow near Altdorf. Trees in the foreground. At the back of the stage a cap upon a pole. The prospect is bounded by the Bannberg, which is surmounted by a snow-capped mountain.

FRIESSHARDT and LEUTHOLD on guard.

FRIESS. We keep our watch in vain. Zounds! not a soul

Will pass, and do obeisance to the cap.
But yesterday the place swarm'd like a fair;
Now the old green looks like a desert, quite,
Since yonder scarecrow hung upon the pole.

LEUTH. Only the vilest rabble show themselves,
And wave their tattered caps in mockery at us.
All honest citizens would sooner make
A weary circuit over half the town,
Then bend their backs before our master's cap.

FRIESS. They were obliged to pass this way at noon,

As they were coming from the Council House.
I counted then upon a famous catch,
For no one thought of bowing to the cap,
But Rösselmann, the priest, was even with me:
Coming just then from some sick man, he takes
His stand before the pole, — lifts up the Host —
The sacrist, too, must tinkle with his bell, —
When down they dropp'd on knee — myself and all —
In reverence to the Host, but not the cap.

LEUTH. Hark ye, companion, I've a shrewd suspicion,

Our post's no better than the pillory.
It is a burning shame a trooper should
Stand sentinel before an empty cap,
And every honest fellow must despise us.

To do obeisance to a cap, too! Faith,
I never heard an order so absurd!

FRIESS. Why not, an't please you, to an empty cap?
You've duck'd, I'm sure, to many an empty sconce.

[HILDEGARD, MECHTHILD, and ELSBETH enter with
their children, and station themselves around
the pole.

LEUTH. And you are a time-serving sneak, that
takes

Delight in bringing honest folks to harm.
For my part, he that likes may pass the cap: —
I'll shut my eyes and take no note of him.

MECH. There hangs the viceroy! Your obeisance,
children!

ELS. I would to God he'd go, and leave his cap!
The country would be none the worse for it.

FRIESS. (*driving them away*) Out of the way! Con-
founded pack of gossips!
Who sent for you? Go, send your husbands here,
If they have courage to defy the order.

[TELL enters with his crossbow, leading his son
WALTER by the hand. They pass the hat
without noticing it, and advance to the front
of the stage.

WALT. (*pointing to the Bannberg*) Father, is't true,
that on the mountain there
The trees, if wounded with a hatchet, bleed?

TELL. Who says so, boy?

WALT. The master herdsman, father!
He tells us there's a charm upon the trees,
And if a man shall injure them, the hand
That struck the blow will grow from out the grave.

TELL. There is a charm about them — that's the
truth.

Dost see those glaciers yonder — those white horns —
That seem to melt away into the sky?

WALT. They are the peaks that thunder so at night,

And send the avalanches down upon us.

TELL. They are; and Altdorf long ago had been
Submerged beneath these avalanches' weight,
Did not the forest there above the town
Stand like a bulwark to arrest their fall.

WALT. (*after musing a little*) And are there coun-
tries with no mountains, father?

TELL. Yes, if we travel downward from our heights,
And keep descending where the rivers go,
We reach a wide and level country, where
Our mountain torrents brawl and foam no more,
And fair large rivers glide serenely on.
All quarters of the heaven may there be scann'd
Without impediment. The corn grows there
In broad and lovely fields, and all the land
Is like a garden fair to look upon.

WALT. But, father, tell me, wherefore haste we not
Away to this delightful land, instead
Of toiling here, and struggling as we do?

TELL. The land is fair and bountiful as Heaven;
But they who till it never may enjoy
The fruits of what they sow.

WALT. Live they not free,
As you do, on the land their fathers left them?

TELL. The fields are all the bishop's or the king's.

WALT. But they may freely hunt among the woods?

TELL. The game is all the monarch's — bird and
beast.

WALT. But they, at least, may surely fish the
streams?

TELL. Stream, lake, and sea, all to the king belong.

WALT. Who is this king, of whom they're so
afraid?

TELL. He is the man who fosters and protects
them.

WALT. Have they not courage to protect them-
selves?

TELL. The neighbour there dare not his neighbour trust.

WALT. I should want breathing room in such a land.

I'd rather dwell beneath the avalanches.

TELL. 'Tis better, child, to have these glacier peaks Behind one's back, than evil-minded men!

[They are about to pass on.]

WALT. See, father, see the cap on yonder pole!

TELL. What is the cap to us? Come, let's begone.

[As he is going, FRIESSHARDT, presenting his pike, stops him.]

FRIESS. Stand, I command you, in the emperor's name!

TELL. *(seizing the pike)* What would ye? Wherefore do ye stop me thus?

FRIESS. You've broke the mandate, and with us must go.

LEUTH. You have not done obeisance to the cap.

TELL. Friend, let me go.

FRIESS. Away, away to prison!

WALT. Father to prison! Help!

[Calling to the side scene.]

This way, you men!

Good people, help! They're dragging him to prison!

[RÖSSELMANN the Priest, and the SACRISTAN, with three other men, enter.]

SACRIST. What's here amiss?

RÖSSEL. Why do you seize this man?

FRIESS. He is an enemy of the king — a traitor.

TELL. *(seizing him with violence)* A traitor, I!

RÖSSEL. Friend, thou art wrong. 'Tis Tell, An honest man, and worthy citizen.

WALT. *(describes FÜRST and runs up to him)* Grandfather, help, they want to seize my father!

FRIESS. Away to prison!

FÜRST. *(running in)* Stay, I offer bail.

For God's sake, Tell, what is the matter here ?

[MELCHTHAL and STAUFFACHER enter.]

LEUTH. He has condemn'd the viceroy's sovereign power,

Refusing flatly to acknowledge it.

STAUFF. Has Tell done this ?

MELCH. Villain, you know 'tis false !

LEUTH. He has not made obeisance to the cap.

FÜRST. And shall for this to prison ? Come, my friend,

Take my security, and let him go.

FRIESS. Keep your security for yourself — you'll need it.

We only do our duty. Hence with him.

MELCH. (*to the country people*) This is too bad — shall we stand by and see

Him dragged away before our very eyes ?

SACRIST. We are the strongest. Friends, endure it not,

Our countrymen will back us to a man.

FRIESS. Who dares resist the governor's commands ?

OTHER THREE PEASANTS. (*running in*) We'll help you. What's the matter ? Down with them !

[HILDEGARD, MECHTHILD and ELSBETH return.]

TELL. Go, go, good people, I can help myself.

Think you, had I a mind to use my strength,

These pikes of theirs should daunt me ?

MELCH. (*to FRIESSHARDT*) Only try —

Try from our midst to force him, if you dare.

FÜRST and STAUFF. Peace, peace, friends !

FRIESS. (*loudly*) Riot ! Insurrection, ho !

[*Hunting-horns without.*]

WOMEN. The governor !

FRIESS. (*raising his voice*) Rebellion ! Mutiny !

STAUFF. Roar till you burst, knave !

RÖSSEL. and MELCH. Will you hold your tongue ?

FRIESS. (*calling still louder*) Help, help, I say, the servants of the law!

FÜRST. The viceroy here! Then we shall smart for this!

[*Enter GESSLER on horseback, with a falcon on his wrist: RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, BERTHA, and RUDENZ, and a numerous train of armed attendants, who form a circle of lances around the whole stage.*

HAR. Room for the viceroy!

GESSL. Drive the clowns apart.
Why throng the people thus? Who calls for help?
[*General silence.*

Who was it? I *will* know.

[*FRIESSHARDT steps forward.*
And who art thou?

And why hast thou this man in custody?

[*Gives his falcon to an attendant.*

FRIESS. Dread sir, I am a soldier of your guard,
And station'd sentinel beside the cap;
This man I apprehended in the act
Of passing it without obeisance due.
So as you ordered, I arrested him,
Whereon to rescue him the people tried.

GESSL. (*after a pause*) And do you, Tell, so lightly
hold your king,
And me, who act as his vice-regent here,
That you refuse obeisance to the cap
I hung aloft to test your loyalty?
I read in this a disaffected spirit.

TELL. Pardon me, good my lord! The action
sprung
From inadvertence, — not from disrespect.
Were I discreet, I were not William Tell.
Forgive me now — I'll not offend again.

GESSL. (*after a pause*) I hear, Tell, you're a master
with the bow, —

From every rival bear the palm away.

WALT. That's very truth, sir! At a hundred yards
He'll shoot an apple for you off the tree.

GESSL. Is that boy thine, Tell?

TELL. Yes, my gracious lord.

GESSL. Hast any more of them?

TELL. Two boys, my lord.

GESSL. And, of the two, which dost thou love the
most?

TELL. Sir, both the boys are dear to me alike.

GESSL. Then, Tell, since at a hundred yards thou
canst

Bring down the apple from the tree, thou shalt
Approve thy skill before me. Take thy bow —
Thou hast it there at hand — make ready, then,
To shoot an apple from the stripling's head!
But take this counsel, — look well to thine aim,
See, that thou hit'st the apple at the first,
For, shouldst thou miss, thy head shall pay the forfeit.

[All give signs of horror.]

TELL. What monstrous thing, my lord, is this you
ask?

What! from the head of mine own child! — No, no!
It cannot be, kind sir, you meant not that —
God in his grace, forbid! You could not ask
A father seriously to do that thing!

GESSL. Thou art to shoot an apple from his head!
I do desire — command it so.

TELL. What, I!
Level my crossbow at the darling head
Of mine own child? No — rather let me die!

GESSL. Or thou must shoot, or with thee dies the
boy.

TELL. Shall I become the murderer of my child!
You have no children, sir — you do not know
The tender throbbings of a father's heart.

GESSL. How now, Tell, on a sudden so discreet?

I had been told thou wert a visionary, —
 A wanderer from the paths of common men.
 Thou lov'st the marvellous. So have I now
 Cull'd out for thee a task of special daring.
 Another man might pause and hesitate ; —
 Thou dashest at it, heart and soul, at once.

BERTH. Oh, do not jest, my lord, with these poor
 souls !

See, how they tremble, and how pale they look,
 So little used are they to hear thee jest.

GESSL. Who tells thee that I jest ?

[*Grasping a branch above his head.*

Here is the apple.

Room there, I say ! And let him take his distance —
 Just eighty paces, — as the custom is, —
 Not an inch more or less ! It was his boast
 That at a hundred he could hit his man.
 Now, archer, to your task, and look you miss not !

HAR. Heavens ! this grows serious — down, boy,
 on your knees,

And beg the governor to spare your life.

FÜRST. (*aside to MELCHTHAL, who can scarcely re-
 strain his indignation*)

Command yourself, — be calm, I beg of you !

BERTH. (*to the governor*) Let this suffice you, sir !
 It is inhuman

To trifle with a father's anguish thus.
 Although this wretched man had forfeited
 Both life and limb for such a slight offence,
 Already has he suffer'd tenfold death.
 Send him away uninjured to his home ;
 He'll know thee well in future ; and this hour
 He and his children's children will remember.

GESSL. Open a way there — quick ! Why this
 delay ?

Thy life is forfeited ; I might despatch thee,
 And see, I graciously repose thy fate

Upon the skill of thine own practised hand.
No cause has he to say his doom is harsh,
Who's made the master of his destiny.
Thou boastest thine unerring aim. 'Tis well!
Now is the fitting time to show thy skill;
The mark is worthy and the prize is great.
To hit the bull's-eye in the target; — that
Can many another do as well as thou;
But he, methinks, is master of his craft,
Who can at all times on his skill rely,
Nor lets his heart disturb or eye or hand.

FÜRST. My lord, we bow to your authority;
But oh, let justice yield to mercy here.
Take half my property, nay, take it all,
But spare a father this unnatural doom!

WALT. Grandfather, do not kneel to that bad man!
Say, where am I to stand? I do not fear;
My father strikes the bird upon the wing,
And will not miss now when 'twould harm his boy!

STAUFF. Does the child's innocence not touch your
heart?

RÖSSEL. Bethink you, sir, there is a God in heaven,
To whom you must account for all your deeds.

GESSL. (*pointing to the boy*) Bind him to yonder
lime-tree!

WALT. What! Bind me?

No, I will not be bound! I will be still,
Still as a lamb — nor even draw my breath!
But if you bind me, I cannot be still.
Then I shall writhe and struggle with my bonds.

HAR. But let your eyes at least be bandaged, boy!

WALT. And why my eyes? No! Do you think
I fear

An arrow from my father's hand? Not I!
I'll wait it firmly, nor so much as wink!
Quick, father, show them what thy bow can do.
He doubts thy skill — he thinks to ruin us.

Shoot then and hit, though but to spite the tyrant!

[*He goes to the lime-tree, and an apple is placed on his head.*]

MELCH. (*to the country people*) What! Is this outrage to be perpetrated

Before our very eyes? Where is our oath?

STAUFF. Resist we cannot! Weapons we have none,

And see the wood of lances round us! See!

MELCH. Oh! would to heaven that we had struck at once!

God pardon those who counsell'd the delay!

GESSL. (*to TELL*) Now to your task! Men bear not arms for naught.

To carry deadly tools is dangerous,

And on the archer oft his shaft recoils.

This right these haughty peasant churls assume

Trenches upon their master's privileges:

None should be armed but those who bear command.

It pleases you to carry bow and bolt;—

Well,—be it so. I will prescribe the mark.

TELL. (*bends the bow, and fixes the arrow*) A lane there! Room!

STAUFF. What, Tell? You would—no, no!

You shake—your hand's unsteady—your knees tremble.

TELL. (*letting the bow sink down*) There's something swims before mine eyes!

WOMEN. Great Heaven!

TELL. Release me from this shot! Here is my heart! [*Tears open his breast.*]

Summon your troopers—let them strike me down!

GESSL. 'Tis not thy life I want—I want the shot.

Thy talent's universal! Nothing daunts thee!

The rudder thou canst handle like the bow!

No storms affright thee, when a life's at stake.

Now, saviour, help thyself, — thou savest all !

[TELL *stands fearfully agitated by contending emotions, his hands moving convulsively, and his eyes turning alternately to the governor and heaven. Suddenly he takes a second arrow from his quiver, and sticks it in his belt. The governor notes all he does.*

WALT. (*beneath the lime-tree*) Shoot, father, shoot !
fear not !

TELL. It must be !
[*Collects himself and levels the bow.*

RUD. (*who all the while has been standing in a state of violent excitement, and has with difficulty restrained himself, advances*)

My lord, you will not urge this matter further ;
You will not. It was surely but a test.
You've gained your object. Rigour push'd too far
Is sure to miss its aim, however good,
As snaps the bow that's all too straitly bent.

GESSL. Peace, till your counsel's ask'd for !

RUD. I will speak !

Ay, and I dare ! I reverence my king ;
But acts like these must make his name abhorr'd.
He sanctions not this cruelty. I dare
Avouch the fact. And you outstep your powers
In handling thus my harmless countrymen.

GESSL. Ha ! thou grow'st bold, methinks !

RUD. I have been dumb
To all the oppressions I was doomed to see.
I've closed mine eyes to shut them from my view,
Bade my rebellious, swelling heart be still,
And pent its struggles down within my breast.
But to be silent longer, were to be
A traitor to my king and country both.

BERTH. (*casting herself between him and the governor*)

Oh, heavens ! you but exasperate his rage !

RUD. My people I forsook — renounced my kindred —

Broke all the ties of nature, that I might
Attach myself to you. I madly thought
That I should best advance the general weal
By adding sinews to the emperor's power.
The scales have fallen from mine eyes — I see
The fearful precipice on which I stand.
You've led my youthful judgment far astray, —
Deceived my honest heart. With best intent,
I had well-nigh achiev'd my country's ruin.

GESSL. Audacious boy, this language to thy lord?

RUD. The emperor is my lord, not you! I'm free
As you by birth, and I can cope with you
In every virtue that befits a knight.
And if you stood not here in that king's name,
Which I respect e'en where 'tis most abused,
I'd throw my gauntlet down, and you should give
An answer to my gage in knightly sort.
Ay, beckon to your troopers! Here I stand;
But not like these *[Pointing to the people.]*
— unarmed. I have a sword,

And he that stirs one step —

STAUFF. *(exclaims)* The apple's down!

*[While the attention of the crowd has been directed
to the spot where BERTHA had cast herself be-
tween RUDENZ and GESSLER, TELL has shot.]*

RÖSSEL. The boy's alive!

MANY VOICES. The apple has been struck!

*[WALTER FÜRST staggers and is about to fall.
BERTHA supports him.]*

GESSL. *(astonished)* How? Has he shot? The
madman!

BERTH. Worthy father!

Pray you, compose yourself. The boy's alive.

WALT. *(runs in with the apple)* Here is the apple,
father! Well I knew

You would not harm your boy.

[TELL *stands with his body bent forward, as if still following the arrow. His bow drops from his hand. When he sees the boy advancing he hastens to meet him with open arms, and embracing him passionately sinks down with him quite exhausted. All crowd round them deeply affected.*

BERTH. Oh, ye kind Heavens!

FÜRST. (*to father and son*) My children, my dear children!

STAUFF. God be praised!

LEUTH. Almighty powers! That was a shot indeed!

It will be talked of to the end of time.

HAR. This feat of Tell, the archer, will be told
Long as these mountains stand upon their base.

[*Hands the apple to GESSLER.*

GESSL. By heaven! the apple's cleft right through
the core.

It was a master shot, I must allow.

RÖSSEL. The shot was good. But woe to him who
drove

The man to tempt his God by such a feat!

STAUFF. Cheer up, Tell, rise! You've nobly freed
yourself,

And now may go in quiet to your home.

RÖSSEL. Come, to the mother let us bear her son!

[*They are about to lead him off.*

GESSL. A word, Tell.

TELL. Sir, your pleasure?

GESSL. Thou didst place

A second arrow in thy belt — nay, nay!

I saw it well. Thy purpose with it? Speak!

TELL. (*confused*) It is the custom with all archers,
sir.

GESSL. No, Tell, I cannot let that answer pass.

There was some other motive, well I know.
 Frankly and cheerfully confess the truth ;—
 Whate'er it be, I promise thee thy life.
 Wherefore the second arrow ?

TELL. Well, my lord,
 Since you have promised not to take my life,
 I will, without reserve, declare the truth.

[*He draws the arrow from his belt, and fixes his eyes sternly upon the governor.*]

If that my hand had struck my darling child,
 This second arrow I had aimed at you.
 And, be assured, I should not then have miss'd.

GESSL. Well, Tell, I promised thou shouldst have
 thy life ;

I gave my knightly word, and I will keep it.
 Yet, as I know the malice of thy thoughts,
 I'll have thee carried hence, and safely penn'd,
 Where neither sun nor moon shall reach thine eyes.
 Thus from thy arrows I shall be secure.
 Seize on him, guards, and bind him ! [*They bind him.*]

STAUFF. How, my lord —
 How can you treat in such a way a man
 On whom God's hand has plainly been reveal'd ?

GESSL. Well, let us see if it will save him twice !
 Remove him to my ship ; I'll follow straight,
 At Küssnacht I will see him safely lodged.

RÖSSEL. You dare not do't. Nor durst the em-
 peror's self
 So violate our dearest chartered rights.

GESSL. Where are they ? Has the emp'ror com-
 firm'd them ?

He never has. And only by obedience
 May you that favour hope to win from him.
 You are all rebels 'gainst the emp'ror's power, —
 And bear a desperate and rebellious spirit.
 I know you all — I see you through and through.
 Him do I single from amongst you now,

But in his guilt you all participate.
If you are wise, be silent and obey!

[*Exit, followed by* BERTHA, RUDENZ, HARRAS, *and attendants.* FRIESSHARDT *and* LEUTHOLD *remain.*

FÜRST. (*in violent anguish*) All's over now! He is resolved to bring

Destruction on myself and all my house.

STAUFF. (*to* TELL) Oh, why did you provoke the tyrant's rage?

TELL. Let him be calm who feels the pangs I felt.

STAUFF. Alas! alas! Our every hope is gone.

With you we all are fettered and enchain'd.

COUNTRY PEOPLE. (*surrounding* TELL) Our last remaining comfort goes with you!

LEUTH. (*approaching him*) I'm sorry for you, Tell, but must obey.

TELL. Farewell!

WALT. (*clinging to him in great agony*) Oh, father, father, father dear!

TELL. (*pointing to heaven*) Thy Father is on high — appeal to him!

STAUFF. Have you no message, Tell, to send your wife?

TELL. (*clasping the boy passionately to his breast*) The boy's uninjured; God will succour me!

[*Tears himself suddenly away, and follows the soldiers of the guard.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Eastern shore of the Lake Lucerne ; rugged and singularly shaped rocks close the prospect to the west. The lake is agitated, violent roaring and rushing of wind, with thunder and lightning at intervals.

KUNZ OF GERSAU, FISHERMAN and BOY.

KUNZ. I saw it with these eyes! Believe me, friend,

It happen'd all precisely as I've said.

FISHER. How! Tell a prisoner, and to Küssnacht borne?

The best man in the land, the bravest arm,
Had we for liberty to strike a blow!

KUNZ. The viceroy takes him up the lake in person:

They were about to go on board, as I
Started from Flüelen; but the gathering storm,
That drove me here to land so suddenly,
May well have hindered them from setting out.

FISHER. Our Tell in chains, and in the viceroy's power!

O, trust me, Gessler will entomb him where
He never more shall see the light of day;
For, Tell once free, the tyrant well might dread
The just revenge of one so deeply wrong'd.

KUNZ. The old Landamman, too — Von Attinghaus —

They say, is lying at the point of death.

FISHER. Then the last anchor of our hopes gives way!

He was the only man that dared to raise
His voice in favour of the people's rights.

KUNZ. The storm grows worse and worse. So,
fare ye well!

I'll go and seek out quarters in the village.

There's not a chance of getting off to-day. [*Exit.*]

FISHER. Tell dragg'd to prison, and the baron dead!

Now, tyranny, exalt thy brazen front, —

Throw every shame aside! Truth's voice is dumb!

The eye that watch'd for us, in darkness closed,

The arm that should have struck thee down, in chains!

BOY. 'Tis hailing hard — come, let us to the hut!

This is no weather to be out in, father!

FISHER. Rage on, ye winds! Ye lightnings, flash
your fires!

Burst, ye swollen clouds! Ye cataracts of heaven,

Descend, and drown the country! In the germ

Destroy the generations yet unborn!

Ye savage elements, be lords of all!

Return, ye bears: ye ancient wolves, return

To this wide howling waste! The land is yours.

Who would live here, when liberty is gone!

BOY. Hark! How the wind whistles, and the whirl-
pool roars,

I never saw a storm so fierce as this!

FISHER. To level at the head of his own child!

Never had father such command before.

And shall not nature, rising in wild wrath,

Revolt against the deed? I should not marvel,

Though to the lake these rocks should bow their heads,

Though yonder pinnacles, yon towers of ice,

That, since creation's dawn, have known no thaw,

Should, from their lofty summits, melt away, —

Though yonder mountains, yon primeval cliffs,

Should topple down, and a new deluge whelm

Beneath its waves all living men's abodes!

[*Bells heard.*]

BOY. Hark, they are ringing on the mountain,
yonder!

They surely see some vessel in distress,
And toll the bell that we may pray for it.

[*Ascends a rock.*]

FISHER. Woe to the bark that now pursues its
course,

Rock'd in the cradle of these storm-tost waves !
Nor helm nor steersman here can aught avail ;
The storm is master. Man is like a ball,
Toss'd 'twixt the winds and billows. Far or near,
No haven offers him its friendly shelter !
Without one ledge to grasp, the sheer smooth rocks
Look down inhospitably on his despair,
And only tender him their flinty breasts.

Boy. (*calling from above*) Father, a ship: from
Flüelen bearing down.

FISHER. Heaven pity the poor wretches! When
the storm

Is once entangled in this strait of ours,
It rages like some savage beast of prey,
Struggling against its cage's iron bars!
Howling, it seeks an outlet — all in vain;
For the rocks hedge it round on every side,
Walling the narrow gorge as high as heaven.

[*He ascends a cliff.*]

Boy. It is the governor of Uri's ship;
By its red poop I know it, and the flag.

FISHER. Judgments of Heaven! Yes, it is he
himself,

It is the governor! Yonder he sails,
And with him bears the burden of his crimes.
The avenger's arm has not been slow to strike!
Now over him he knows a mightier lord.
These waves yield no obedience to his voice.
These rocks bow not their heads before his cap.
Boy, do not pray; stay not the Judge's arm!

Boy. I pray not for the governor, I pray
For Tell, who's with him there on board the ship.

FISHER. Alas, ye blind, unreasoning elements!
Must ye, in punishing one guilty head,
Destroy the vessel and the pilot too?

BOY. See, see, they've clear'd the Buggisgrat;¹ but
now

The blast, rebounding from the Devil's Minster,¹
Has driven them back on the Great Axenberg.¹
I cannot see them now.

FISHER. The Hakmesser¹
Is there, that's founder'd many a gallant ship.
If they should fail to double that with skill,
Their bark will go to pieces on the rocks
That hide their jagged peaks below the lake.
The best of pilots, boy, they have on board.
If man could save them, Tell is just the man,
But he is manacled both hand and foot.

[Enter WILLIAM TELL, with his crossbow. He enters precipitately, looks wildly round, and testifies the most violent agitation. When he reaches the centre of the stage, he throws himself upon his knees, and stretches out his hands, first toward the earth, then toward heaven.]

BOY. (observing him) See, father! A man on's
knees, who can it be?

FISHER. He clutches at the earth with both his
hands,
And looks as though he were beside himself.

BOY. (advancing) What do I see? Come, father,
come and look!

FISHER. (approaches) Who is it? God in heaven!
What! William Tell!
How came you hither? Speak, Tell!

BOY. Were you not
In yonder ship, a prisoner, and in chains?

FISHER. Were they not carrying you to Küssnacht,
Tell?

¹ Rocks on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne.

TELL. (*rising*) I am released.

FISHER. *and* BOY. Released, oh, miracle!

BOY. Whence came you here?

TELL. From yonder vessel!

FISHER. What?

BOY. Where is the viceroy?

TELL. Drifting on the waves.

FISHER. Is't possible? But you! How are you here?

How 'scaped you from your fetters and the storm?

TELL. By God's most gracious providence. Attend.

FISHER. *and* BOY. Say on, say on!

TELL. You know what passed at Altdorf.

FISHER. I do — say on!

TELL. How I was seized and bound,
And order'd by the governor to Küssnacht.

FISHER. And how at Flüelen he embarked with
you.

All this we know. Say, how have you escaped?

TELL. I lay on deck, fast bound with cords, dis-
arm'd,

In utter hopelessness. I did not think
Again to see the glad some light of day,
Nor the dear faces of my wife and boys,
And eyed disconsolate the waste of waters. —

FISHER. Oh, wretched man!

TELL. Then we put forth; the viceroy,
Rudolph der Harras, and their suite. My bow
And quiver lay astern beside the helm;
And just as we had reached the corner, near
The little Axen,¹ Heaven ordain'd it so,
That from the Gotthardt's gorge, a hurricane
Swept down upon us with such headlong force,
That every oarsman's heart within him sank,
And all on board look'd for a watery grave.
Then heard I one of the attendant train,

¹ A rock on the shore of the Lake of Lucerne.



Turning to Gessler, in this wise accost him :
" You see our danger, and your own, my lord,
And that we hover on the verge of death.
The boatmen there are powerless from fear,
Nor are they confident what course to take ; —
Now, here is Tell, a stout and fearless man,
And knows to steer with more than common skill,
How if we should avail ourselves of him
In this emergency ? " The viceroy then
Address'd me thus : " If thou wilt undertake
To bring us through this tempest safely, Tell,
I might consent to free thee from thy bonds."
I answer'd, " Yes, my lord ; so help me God,
I'll see what can be done." On this they loosed
The cords that bound me, and I took my place
Beside the helm, and steered as best I could,
Yet ever eyed my shooting gear askance,
And kept a watchful eye upon the shore,
To find some point where I might leap to land :
And when I had descried a shelving crag,
That jutted, smooth atop, into the lake —
FISHER. I know it. At the foot of the Great
Axen ;

So steep it looks, I never could have dreamt
That from a boat a man could leap to it.

TELL. I bade the men to row with all their force
Until we came before the shelving ledge.
For there, I said, the danger will be past !
Stoutly they pull'd, and soon we near'd the point ;
One prayer to God for his assisting grace,
And, straining every muscle, I brought round
The vessel's stern close to the rocky wall ;
Then snatching up my weapons, with a bound
I swung myself upon the flattened shelf,
And with my feet thrust off, with all my might,
The puny bark into the watery hell.
There let it drift about, as Heaven ordains !

Thus am I here, deliver'd from the might
Of the dread storm, and man's more dreadful still.

FISHER. Tell, Tell, the Lord has manifestly wrought
A miracle in thy behalf! I scarce
Can credit my own eyes. But tell me, now,
Whither you purpose to betake yourself?
For you will be in peril, should perchance
The vicéroy 'scape this tempest with his life.

TELL. I heard him say, as I lay bound on board,
At Brunnen he proposed to disembark,
And, crossing Schwytz, convey me to his castle.

FISHER. Means he to go by land?

TELL. So he intends.

FISHER. Oh, then conceal yourself without delay!
Not twice will Heaven release you from his grasp.

TELL. Which is the nearest way to Arth and
Küssnacht?

FISHER. The public road leads by the way of
Steinen,

But there's a nearer road, and more retired,
That goes by Lowerz, which my boy can show you.

TELL. (*gives him his hand*) May Heaven reward
your kindness! Fare ye well.

[*As he is going, he comes back.*]

Did not you also take the oath at Rootli?

I heard your name, methinks.

FISHER. Yes, I was there,
And took the oath of the confederacy.

TELL. Then do me this one favour: speed to
Bürglen —

My wife is anxious at my absence — tell her
That I am free, and in secure concealment.

FISHER. But whither shall I tell her you have fled?

TELL. You'll find her father with her, and some
more,

Who took the oath with you upon the Rootli;
Bid them be resolute, and strong of heart, —

For Tell is free and master of his arm ;
They shall hear further news of me ere long.

FISHER. What have you, then, in view ? Come,
tell me frankly !

TELL. When once 'tis *done*, 'twill be in every
mouth. [Exit.]

FISHER. Show him the way, boy. Heaven be his
support !

Whate'er he has resolved, he'll execute. [Exit.]

SCENE II.

*Baronial mansion of Attinghausen. The BARON upon
a couch dying. WALTER FÜRST, STAUFFACHER,
MELCHTHAL, and BAUMGARTEN attending around
him. WALTER TELL kneeling before the dying
man.*

FÜRST. All now is over with him. He is gone.

STAUFF. He lies not like one dead. The feather,
see,

Moves on his lips ! His sleep is very calm,
And on his features plays a placid smile.

[BAUMGARTEN goes to the door and speaks with
some one.]

FÜRST. Who's there ?

BAUM. (*returning*) Tell's wife, your daughter, she
insists

That she must speak with you, and see her boy.

[WALTER TELL rises.]

FÜRST. I who need comfort — can I comfort her ?
Does every sorrow centre on my head ?

HEDW. (*forcing her way in*) Where is my child ?
unhand me ! I must see him.

STAUFF. Be calm ! Reflect, you're in the house of
death !

HEDW. (*falling upon her boy's neck*) My Walter!
Oh, he yet is mine!

WALT. Dear mother!

HEDW. And is it surely so? Art thou unhurt?

[*Gazing at him with anxious tenderness.*]

And is it possible he aim'd at thee?

How could he do it? Oh, he has no heart —

And he could wing an arrow at his child!

FÜRST. His soul was rack'd with anguish when he
did it.

No choice was left him, but to shoot or die!

HEDW. Oh, if he had a father's heart, he would
Have sooner perish'd by a thousand deaths!

STAUFF. You should be grateful for God's gracious
care,

That ordered things so well.

HEDW. Can I forget

What might have been the issue? God of Heaven,

Were I to live for centuries, I still

Should see my boy tied up, — his father's mark, —

And still the shaft would quiver in my heart.

MELCH. You know not how the viceroy taunted him!

HEDW. Oh, ruthless heart of man! Offend his
pride,

And reason in his breast forsakes her seat;

In his blind wrath he'll stake upon a cast

A child's existence, and a mother's heart!

BAUM. Is then your husband's fate not hard
enough,

That you embitter it by such reproaches?

Have you no feeling for his sufferings?

HEDW. (*turning to him and gazing full upon him*)
Hast thou tears only for thy friend's dis-
tress?

Say, where were you when he — my noble Tell —

Was bound in chains? Where was your friendship
then?

The shameful wrong was done before your eyes;
 Patient you stood, and let your friend be dragg'd,
 Ay, from your very hands. Did ever Tell
 Act thus to you? Did he stand whining by,
 When on your heels the viceroy's horsemen press'd,
 And full before you roared the storm-toss'd lake?
 Oh not with idle tears his pity show'd;
 Into the boat he sprang, forgot his home,
 His wife, his children, and delivered thee!

FÜRST. It had been madness to attempt his rescue,
 Unarm'd, and few in numbers as we were.

HEDW. (*casting herself upon his bosom*) Oh, father,
 and thou, too, hast lost my Tell!

The country — all have lost him! All lament
 His loss; and, oh, how he must pine for us!
 Heaven keep his soul from sinking to despair!
 No friend's consoling voice can penetrate
 His dreary dungeon walls. Should he fall sick!
 Ah! In the vapours of the murky vault
 He must fall sick. Even as the Alpine rose
 Grows pale and withers in the swampy air,
 There is no life for him, but in the sun,
 And in the breath of Heaven's fresh-blowing airs.
 Imprison'd! Liberty to him is breath;
 He cannot live in the rank dungeon air!

STAUFF. Pray you be calm! And hand in hand
 we'll all

Combine to burst his prison doors.

HEDW. He gone,

What have you power to do? While Tell was free,
 There still, indeed, was hope — weak innocence
 Had still a friend, and the oppress'd a stay.
 Tell saved you all! You cannot all combined
 Release him from his cruel prison bonds.

[*The BARON wakes.*

BAUM. Hush, hush! He starts!

ATTING. (*sitting up*)

Where is he?

STAUFF. Who ?

ATTING. He leaves me, —

In my last moments he abandons me.

STAUFF. He means his nephew. Have they sent for him ?

FÜRST. He has been summoned. Cheerly, sir !
Take comfort !

He has found his heart at last, and is our own.

ATTING. Say, has he spoken for his native land ?

STAUFF. Ay, like a hero !

ATTING. Wherefore comes he not,
That he may take my blessing ere I die ?
I feel my life fast ebbing to a close.

STAUFF. Nay, talk not thus, dear sir ! This last
short sleep

Has much refresh'd you, and your eye is bright.

ATTING. Life is but pain, and that has left me now ;
My sufferings, like my hopes, have pass'd away.

[*Observing the boy.*]

What boy is that ?

FÜRST. Bless him. Oh, good my lord !

He is my grandson, and is fatherless.

[*HEDWIG kneels with the boy before the dying man.*]

ATTING. And fatherless — I leave you all, ay, all !
Oh, wretched fate, that these old eyes should see
My country's ruin, as they close in death !
Must I attain the utmost verge of life,
To feel my hopes go with me to the grave ?

STAUFF. (*to FÜRST*) Shall he depart 'mid grief and
gloom like this ?

Shall not his parting moments be illumed
By hope's inspiring beams ? My noble lord,
Raise up your drooping spirit ! We are not
Forsaken quite — past all deliverance.

ATTING. Who shall deliver you ?

FÜRST. Ourselves. For know,
The cantons three are to each other pledged,

To hunt the tyrants from the land. The league
Has been concluded, and a sacred oath
Confirms our union. Ere another year
Begins its circling course — the blow shall fall.
In a free land your ashes shall repose.

ATTING. The league concluded! Is it really so?

MELCH. On one day shall the cantons rise together.
All is prepared to strike — and to this hour
The secret closely kept, though hundreds share it;
The ground is hollow 'neath the tyrants' feet;
Their days of rule are number'd, and ere long
No trace will of their hateful sway be left.

ATTING. Ay, but their castles, how to master them?

MELCH. On the same day they, too, are doom'd to
fall.

ATTING. And are the nobles parties to this league?

STAUFF. We trust to their assistance, should we
need it;

As yet the peasantry alone have sworn.

ATTING. (*raising himself up in great astonishment*)
And have the peasantry dared such a deed
On their own charge, without the nobles' aid —
Relied so much on their own proper strength?
Nay then, indeed, they want our help no more;
We may go down to death cheer'd by the thought,
That after us the majesty of man
Will live, and be maintain'd by other hands.

[*He lays his hand upon the head of the child who
is kneeling before him.*]

From this boy's head, whereon the apple lay,
Your new and better liberty shall spring;
The old is crumbling down — the times are changing —
And from the ruins blooms a fairer life.

STAUFF. (*to FÜRST*) See, see, what splendour
streams around his eye!

This is not nature's last expiring flame,
It is the beam of renovated life.

ATTING. From their old towers the nobles are
 descending,
 And swearing in the towns the civic oath.
 In Uechtland and Thurgau the work's begun;
 The noble Berne lifts her commanding head,
 And Freiburg is a stronghold of the free;
 The stirring Zurich calls her guilds to arms; —
 And now, behold! — the ancient might of kings
 Is shiver'd 'gainst her everlasting walls.

*[He speaks what follows with a prophetic tone;
 his utterance rising into enthusiasm.]*

I see the princes and their haughty peers,
 Clad all in steel, come striding on to crush
 A harmless shepherd race with mailèd hand.
 Desprate the conflict; 'tis for life or death;
 And many a pass will tell to after years
 Of glorious victories sealed in foemen's blood.
 The peasant throws himself with naked breast,¹
 A willing victim on their serried spears;
 They yield — the flower of chivalry's cut down,
 And Freedom waves her conquering banner high.

[Grasps the hands of] WALTER FÜRST and STAUF-
 FACHER.

Hold fast together, then, — for ever fast!
 Let freedom's haunts be one in heart and mind!
 Set watches on your mountain tops, that league
 May answer league, when comes the hour to strike.
 Be one — be one — be one —

¹ An allusion to the gallant self-devotion of Arnold Struthan of Winkelried, at the battle of Sempach [9th July, 1386], who broke the Austrian phalanx by rushing on their lances, grasping as many of them as he could reach, and concentrating them upon his breast. The confederates rushed forward through the gap thus opened by the sacrifice of their comrade, broke and cut down their enemy's ranks, and soon became the master of the field. "Dear and faithful confederates, I will open you a passage. Protect my wife and children," were the words of Winkelried, as he rushed to death.

[*He falls back upon the cushion. His lifeless hands continue to grasp those of FÜRST and STAUFFACHER, who regard him for some moments in silence, and then retire, overcome with sorrow. Meanwhile the servants have quietly pressed into the chamber, testifying different degrees of grief. Some kneel down beside him and weep on his body: while this scene is passing, the castle bell tolls.*

RUD. (*entering hurriedly*) Lives he? Oh, say, can he still hear my voice?

FÜRST. (*averting his face*) You are our seignior and protector now;

Henceforth this castle bears another name.

RUD. (*gazing at the body with deep emotion*) Oh, God! Is my repentance, then, too late?

Could he not live some few brief moments more,

To see the change that has come o'er my heart?

Oh, I was deaf to his true counselling voice,

While yet he walked on earth. Now he is gone, —

Gone, and for ever, — leaving me the debt —

The heavy debt I owe him — undischarged!

Oh, tell me! did he part in anger with me?

STAUFF. When dying, he was told what you had done,

And bless'd the valour that inspired your words.

RUD. (*kneeling down beside the dead body*) Yes, sacred relics of a man beloved!

Thou lifeless corpse! Here, on thy death-cold hand,

Do I abjure all foreign ties for ever!

And to my country's cause devote myself.

I am a Switzer, and will act as one,

With my whole heart and soul.

[*Rises.*

Mourn for our friend,

Our common parent, yet be not dismay'd!

'Tis not alone his lands that I inherit, —

His heart — his spirit, have devolved on me;

And my young arm shall execute the task,
Which in his hoary age he could not pay.
Give me your hands, ye venerable sires!
Thine, Melchthal, too! Nay, do not hesitate,
Nor from me turn distrustfully away.
Accept my plighted vow — my knightly oath!

FÜRST. Give him your hands, my friends! A
heart like his,

That sees and owns its error, claims our trust.

MELCH. You ever held the peasantry in scorn,
What surety have we that you mean us fair?

RUD. Oh, think not of the error of my youth!

STAUFF. (*to MELCHTHAL*) Be one! They were our
father's latest words.

See they be not forgotten!

MELCH. Take my hand, —

A peasant's hand, — and with it, noble sir,

The gage and the assurance of a man!

Without us, sir, what would the nobles be?

Our order is more ancient, too, than yours!

RUD. I honour it — will shield it with my sword!

MELCH. The arm, my lord, that tames the stubborn
earth,

And makes its bosom blossom with increase,

Can also shield its owner's breast at need.

RUD. Then you shall shield my breast, and I will
yours,

Thus each be strengthen'd by the other's strength.

Yet wherefore talk we, while our native land

Is still to alien tyranny a prey?

First let us sweep the foemen from the soil,

Then reconcile our difference in peace!

[*After a moment's pause.*]

How! You are silent! Not a word for me?

And have I yet no title to your trust? —

Then must I force my way, despite your will,

Into the league you secretly have form'd.

You've held a Diet on the Rootli, — I
Know this, — know all that was transacted there ;
And though not trusted with your secret, I
Have kept it closely like a sacred pledge.
Trust me — I never was my country's foe,
Nor would I ever have against you stood !
Yet you did wrong — to put your rising off.
Time presses ! We must strike, and swiftly too !
Already Tell is lost through your delay.

STAUFF. We swore that we should wait till Christ-
mastide.

RUD. I was not there, — I did not take the oath.
If you delay, I will not !

MELCH. What ! You would —

RUD. I count me now among the country's chiefs.
And my first duty is to guard your rights.

FÜRST. Your nearest and your holiest duty is
Within the earth to lay these dear remains.

RUD. When we have set the country free, we'll
place

Our fresh victorious wreaths upon his bier.

Oh, my dear friends, 'tis not your cause alone ! —

I with the tyrants have a cause to fight,

That more concerns myself. My Bertha's gone,

Has disappear'd, — been carried off by stealth, —

Stolen from amongst us by their ruffian hands !

STAUFF. So fell an outrage has the tyrant dared
Against a lady free and nobly born ?

RUD. Alas ! my friends, I promised help to you,
And I must first implore it for myself !

She that I love is stolen — is forced away,

And who knows where she's by the tyrant hid,

Or with what outrages his ruffian crew

May force her into nuptials she detests ?

Forsake me not ! — Oh, help me to her rescue !

She loves you ! Well, oh well, has she deserved

That all should rush to arms in her behalf !

STAUFF. What course do you propose ?

RUD. Alas ! I know not.

In the dark mystery that shrouds her fate, —
In the dread agony of this suspense, —
Where I can grasp at nought of certainty, —
One single ray of comfort beams upon me.
From out the ruins of the tyrant's power
Alone can she be rescued from the grave.
Their strongholds must be levell'd, every one,
Ere we can penetrate her dungeon walls.

MELCH. Come, lead us on ! We follow ! Why defer
Until to-morrow, what to-day may do ?
Tell's arm was free when we at Rootli swore.
This foul enormity was yet undone.
And change of circumstance brings change of vow ;
Who such a coward as to waver still ?

RUD. (to WALTER FÜRST) Meanwhile to arms, and
wait in readiness

The fiery signal on the mountain tops !
For swifter than a boat can scour the lake .
Shall you have tidings of our victory ;
And when you see the welcome flames ascend,
Then, like the lightning, swoop upon the foe,
And lay the despots and their creatures low !

SCENE III.

The pass near Küssnacht, sloping down from behind, with rocks on either side. The travellers are visible upon the heights, before they appear on the stage. Rocks all around the stage. Upon one of the foremost a projecting cliff overgrown with brush-wood.

TELL. (enters with his crossbow) Through this ravine
he needs must come. There is
No other way to Küssnacht. Here I'll do it !

The ground is everything I could desire.
Yon elder bush will hide me from his view,
And from that point my shaft is sure to hit.
The straitness of the gorge forbids pursuit.
Now, Gessler, balance thine account with Heaven!
Thou must away from earth, — thy sand is run.

Quiet and harmless was the life I led,
My bow was bent on forest game alone;
No thoughts of murder rested on my soul.
But thou hast scared me from my dream of peace;
The milk of human kindness thou hast turn'd
To rankling poison in my breast; and made
Appalling deeds familiar to my soul.
He who could make his own child's head his mark
Can speed his arrow to his foeman's heart.

My boys, poor innocents, my loyal wife,
Must be protected, tyrant, from thy rage!
When last I drew my bow — with trembling hand —
And thou, with fiendishly remorseless glee
Forced me to level at my own boy's head,
When I, imploring pity, writhed before thee,
Then, in the anguish of my soul, I vow'd
And fearful oath, which met God's ear alone,
That when my bow next wing'd an arrow's flight,
Its aim should be thy heart. The vow I made,
Amid the hellish torments of that moment,
I hold a sacred debt, and I will pay it.

Thou art my lord, my emperor's delegate;
Yet would the emperor not have stretch'd his power
So far as thou hast done. He sent thee here
To deal forth law — stern law — for he is wroth;
But not to wanton with unbridled will
In every cruelty, with fiend-like joy: —
There lives a God to punish and avenge.

Come forth, thou bringer once of bitter pangs,
My precious jewel now, — my chiefest treasure —
A mark I'll set thee, which the cry of grief
Could never penetrate, — but thou shalt pierce it, —
And thou, my trusty bowstring, that so oft
For sport has served me faithfully and well,
Desert me not in this dread hour of need, —
Only be true this once, my own good cord,
That hast so often wing'd the biting shaft: —
For shouldst thou fly successful from my hand,
I have no second to send after thee.

[Travellers pass over the stage.]

I'll sit me down upon this bench of stone,
Hewn for the wayworn traveller's brief repose —
For here there is no home. Men hurry past
Each other, with quick step and careless look,
Nor stay to question of their grief. Here goes
The merchant, all anxiety, — the pilgrim,
With scanty furnished scrip, — the pious monk,
The scowling robber, and the jovial player,
The carrier with his heavy-laden horse,
That comes to us from the far haunts of men;
For every road conducts to the world's end.
They all push onward — every man intent
On his own several business — mine is murder.

[Sits down.]

Time was, my dearest children, when with joy
You hail'd your father's safe return to home
From his long mountain toils; for, when he came,
He ever brought with him some little gift, —
A lovely Alpine flower — a curious bird —
Or elf-bolt, such as on the hills are found.
But now he goes in quest of other game,
Sits in this gorge, with murder in his thoughts,
And for his enemy's life-blood lies in wait.

But still it is of you alone he thinks,
Dear children. 'Tis to guard your innocence,
To shield you from the tyrant's fell revenge,
He bends his bow to do a deed of blood ! [Rises.

Well — I am watching for a noble prey —
Does not the huntsman, with unflinching heart,
Roam for whole days, when winter frosts are keen,
Leap at the risk of death from rock to rock, —
And climb the jagged, slippery steeps, to which
His limbs are glued by his own streaming blood —
And all to hunt a wretched chamois down ?
A far more precious prize is now my aim —
The heart of that dire foe, who seeks my life.

*[Sprightly music heard in the distance, which
comes gradually nearer.]*

From my first years of boyhood I have used
The bow — been practised in the archer's feats ;
The bull's-eye many a time my shafts have hit,
And many a goodly prize have I brought home
From competitions. But this day I'll make
My master-shot, and win what's best to win
In the whole circuit of our mountain range.

*[A bridal party passes over the stage, and goes up
the pass. TELL gazes at it, leaning on his
bow. He is joined by STUSSI the Ranger.]*

STUSSI. There goes the cloister bailiff's bridal train
Of Mörlischachen. A rich fellow he !
And has some half score pastures on the Alps.
He goes to fetch his bride from Imisee.
At Küssnacht there will be high feast to-night.
Come with us — ev'ry honest man is asked.

TELL. A gloomy guest fits not a wedding feast.

STUSSI. If you've a trouble, dash it from your
heart !

Take what Heaven sends ! The times are heavy now,
And we must snatch at pleasure as it flies.
Here 'tis a bridal, there a burial.

TELL. And oft the one close on the other treads.

STUSSI. So runs the world we live in. Everywhere
Mischance befalls and misery enough.
In Glarus there has been a landslip, and
A whole side of the Glärnisch has fallen in.

TELL. How ! Do the very hills begin to quake ?
There is stability for naught on earth.

STUSSI. Of strange things, too, we hear from other
parts.

I spoke with one but now, from Baden come,
Who said a knight was on his way to court,
And, as he rode along, a swarm of wasps
Surrounded him, and settling on his horse,
So fiercely stung the beast, that it fell dead,
And he proceeded to the court on foot.

TELL. The weak are also furnish'd with a sting.

ARMGART *enters with several children, and places herself at the entrance of the pass.*

STUSSI. 'Tis thought to bode disaster to the land, —
Some horrid deeds against the course of nature.

TELL. Why, every day brings forth such fearful
deeds ;

There needs no prodigy to herald them.

STUSSI. Ay, happy he who tills his field in peace,
And sits at home untroubled with his kin.

TELL. The very meekest cannot be at peace
If his ill neighbour will not let him rest.

[TELL *looks frequently with restless expectation toward the top of the pass.*

STUSSI. So fare you well ! You're waiting some
one here ?

TELL. I am.

STUSSI. God speed you safely to your home !

You are from Uri, are you not? His Grace
The governor's expected thence to-day.

TRAVELLER. (*entering*) Look not to see the governor
to-day.

The streams are flooded by the heavy rains,
And all the bridges have been swept away.

[TELL rises.

ARM. (*coming forward*) Gessler not coming?

STUSSI. Want you aught with him?

ARM. Alas, I do!

STUSSI. Why, then, thus place yourself

Where you obstruct his passage down the pass?

ARM. Here he cannot escape me. He *must* hear me.

FRIESS. (*coming hastily down the pass and calls
upon the stage*)

Make way, make way! My lord, the governor,
Is close behind me, riding down the pass. [*Exit* TELL.

ARM. (*excitedly*) The viceroy comes!

[*She goes toward the pass with her children.*

GESSLER and RUDOLPH DER HARRAS appear
on horseback at the upper end of the pass.

STUSSI. (*to FRIESSHARDT*) How got ye through the
stream,

When all the bridges have been carried down?

FRIESS. We've fought, friend, with the tempest on
the lake;

An Alpine torrent's nothing after that.

STUSSI. How! were you out, then, in that dreadful
storm?

FRIESS. We were! I'll not forget it while I live.

STUSSI. Stay, speak —

FRIESS. I can't, — must to the castle haste,
And tell them that the governor's at hand. [*Exit.*

STUSSI. If honest men, now, had been in the ship,
It had gone down with every soul on board: —
Some folks are proof 'gainst fire and water both.

[*Looking round.*

Where has the huntsman gone with whom I spoke?

[*Exit.*

Enter GESSLER and RUDOLPH DER HARRAS on horseback.

GESSL. Say what you will; I am the emperor's liege,

And how to please him my first thought must be.

He did not send me here to fawn and cringe,

And coax these boors into good humour. No!

Obedience he must have. The struggle's this;

Is king or peasant to be sovereign here?

ARM. Now is the moment! Now for my petition!

GESSL. 'Twas not in sport that I set up the cap

In Altdorf — or to try the people's hearts —

All this I knew before. I set it up,

That they might learn to bend those stubborn necks

They carry far too proudly — and I placed

What well I knew their pride could never brook

Full in the road, which they perforce must pass,

That, when their eye fell on it, they might call

That lord to mind whom they too much forget.

HAR. But surely, sir, the people have some rights —

GESSL. This is no time to settle what they are.

Great projects are at work, and hatching now.

The imperial house seeks to extend its power.

Those vast designs of conquest which the sire

Has gloriously begun, the son will end.

This petty nation is a stumbling-block —

One way or other, it must be put down.

[*They are about to pass on. ARMGART throws herself down before GESSLER.*

ARM. Mercy, lord governor! Oh, pardon, pardon!

GESSL. Why do you cross me on the public road?

Stand back, I say!

ARM. My husband lies in prison;

My wretched orphans cry for bread. Have pity,

Pity, my lord, upon our sore distress!

HAR. Who are you ? and your husband, what is he ?

ARM. A poor wild-hay-man of the Rigiberg,
Kind sir, who, on the brow of the abyss,
Mows the unowner'd grass from craggy shelves
To which the very cattle dare not climb.

HAR. (*to GESSLER*) By Heaven ! a sad and pitiable
life !

I pray you set the wretched fellow free.
How great soever may be his offence,
His horrid trade is punishment enough. [*To ARMGART.*
You shall have justice. To the castle bring
Your suit. This is no place to deal with it.

ARM. No, no, I will not stir from where I stand,
Until your Grace gives me my husband back.
Six months already has he been shut up,
And waits the sentence of a judge in vain.

GESSL. How ! would you force me, woman ? Hence !
Begone !

ARM. Justice, my lord ! Ay, justice ! Thou art
judge :

Vice-regent of the emperor — of Heaven.
Then do thy duty, — as thou hopest for justice
From Him who rules above, show it to us !

GESSL. Hence ! Drive this insolent rabble from
my sight !

ARM. (*seizing his horse's reins*) No, no, by Heaven,
I've nothing more to lose. —

Thou stir'st not, viceroy, from this spot, until
Thou dost me fullest justice. Knit thy brows,
And roll thine eyes — I fear not. Our distress
Is so extreme, so boundless, that we care
No longer for thine anger.

GESSL. Woman, hence !
Give way, or else my horse shall ride you down.

ARM. Well, let it ! — there —

[*Throws her children and herself upon the ground
before him.*]

Here on the ground I lie,
 I and my children. Let the wretched orphans
 Be trodden by thy horse into the dust!
 It will not be the worst that thou hast done.

HAR. Are you mad, woman?

ARM. (*continuing with vehemence*) Many a day thou
 hast

Trampled the emperor's lands beneath thy feet.
 Oh, I am but a woman! Were I man,
 I'd find some better thing to do, than here
 Lie grovelling in the dust.

[*The music of the bridal party is again heard
 from the top of the pass, but more softly.*]

GESSL. Where are my knaves?

Drag her away, lest I forget myself,
 And do some deed I may repent me of.

HAR. My lord, the servants cannot force their
 way;

The pass is block'd up by a bridal train.

GESSL. Too mild a ruler am I to this people,
 Their tongues are all too bold — nor have they yet
 Been tamed to due submission, as they shall be.
 I must take order for the remedy;
 I will subdue this stubborn mood of theirs,
 This braggart spirit of freedom I will crush,
 I will proclaim a new law through the land;
 I will —

[*An arrow pierces him, — he puts his hand on
 his heart, and is about to sink — with a feeble
 voice.*]

Oh God, have mercy on my soul!

HAR. My lord! my lord! Oh God! What's this?
 Whence came it?

ARM. (*starts up*) Dead, dead! He reels, he falls!
 'Tis in his heart!

HAR. (*springs from his horse*) Horror of horrors!
 Heavenly powers! Sir knight,

Address yourself for mercy to your God!
You are a dying man.

GESSL. That shot was Tell's.

[*He slides from his horse into the arms of RUDOLPH DER HARRAS, who lays him down upon the bench. TELL appears above upon the rocks.*

TELL. Thou know'st the marksman — I, and I alone.

Now are our homesteads free, and innocence
From thee is safe: thou'lt be our curse no more.

[*TELL disappears. People rush in.*

STUSSI. What is the matter? Tell me what has happen'd?

ARM. The viceroy's shot, — pierced by a crossbow bolt!

PEOPLE. (*running in*) Who has been shot?

[*While the foremost of the marriage party are coming on the stage, the hindmost are still upon the heights. The music continues.*

HAR. He's bleeding fast to death.

Away, for help — pursue the murderer!

Unhappy man, is this to be your end?

You would not listen to my warning words.

STUSSI. By Heaven, his cheek is pale! Life's ebbing fast.

MANY VOICES. Who did the deed?

HAR. What! Are the people mad,
That they make music to a murder? Silence!

[*Music breaks off suddenly. People continue to flock in.*

Speak, if you can, my lord. Have you no charge
To trust me with?

[*GESSLER makes signs with his hand, which he repeats with vehemence, when he finds they are not understood.*

Where shall I take you to?

To Küssnacht? What you say I can't make out.

Oh, do not grow impatient! Leave all thought
Of earthly things and make your peace with Heaven.

[*The whole marriage party gather round the dying man.*]

STUSSI. See there! how pale he grows! Death's
gathering now
About his heart; — his eyes grow dim and glazed.

ARM. (*holds up a child*) Look, children, how a
tyrant dies!

HAR. Mad hag!
Have you no touch of feeling, that your eyes
Gloat on a sight so horrible as this?
Help me — take hold. What, will not one assist
To pull the torturing arrow from his breast?

WOMEN. What! touch the man whom God's own
hand has struck!

HAR. All curses light on you! [*Draws his sword.*]

STUSSI. (*seizes his arm*) Gently, sir knight!
Your power is at end. 'Twere best forbear.
Our country's foe has fallen. We will brook
No further violence. We are free men.

ALL. The country's free.

HAR. And is it come to this?
Fear and obedience at an end so soon?

[*To the soldiers of the guard who are thronging in.*]
You see, my friends, the bloody piece of work
Has here been done. 'Tis now too late for help,
And to pursue the murderer were vain.
We've other things to think of. On to Küssnacht,
And let us save that fortress for the king!
For in a moment such as this, all ties
Of order, fealty, and faith, are rent,
And we can trust to no man's loyalty.

[*As he is going out with the soldiers, six FRATRES
MISERICORDIÆ appear.*]

ARM. Here comes the brotherhood of mercy.
Room!

STUSSI. The victim's slain, and now the ravens stoop.

BROTHERS OF MERCY (*form a semicircle round the body, and sing in solemn tones*)

Death hurries on with hasty stride,
No respite man from him may gain,
He cuts him down, when life's full tide
Is throbbing strong in every vein.
Prepared or not the call to hear,
He must before his Judge appear.

[*While they are repeating the two last lines, the curtain falls.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A common near Altdorf. In the background, to the right, the Keep of Uri, with the scaffold still standing, as in the Third Scene of the First Act. To the left, the view opens upon numerous mountains, on all of which signal fires are burning. Day is breaking, and distant bells are heard ringing in several directions.

RUODI, KUONI, WERNI, MASTER MASON, and many other country people, also women and children.

RUODI. See there! The beacons on the mountain heights!

MASON. Hark how the bells above the forest toll!

RUODI. The enemy's routed.

MASON. And the forts are storm'd.

RUODI. And we of Uri, do we still endure
Upon our native soil the tyrant's keep?
Are we the last to strike for liberty?

MASON. Shall the yoke stand, that was to curb our necks?

Up! Tear it to the ground!

ALL. Down, down with it!

RUODI. Where is the Stier of Uri?

URI. Here. What would ye?

RUODI. Up to your tower, and wind us such a blast,

As shall resound afar, from peak to peak;

Rousing the echoes of each glen and hill,

To rally swiftly all the mountain men!

[*Exit STIER OF URI. — Enter WALTER FÜRST.*

FÜRST. Stay, stay, my friends! As yet we have not learn'd

What has been done in Unterwald and Schwytz.

Let's wait till we receive intelligence!

RUODI. Wait, wait for what? The accursed tyrant's dead,

And on us freedom's glorious day has dawn'd!

MASON. How! Are these flaming signals not enough,

That blaze on every mountain top around?

RUODI. Come all, fall to — come, men and women, all!

Destroy the scaffold! Burst the arches! Down,

Down with the walls, let not a stone remain!

MASON. Come, comrades, come! We built it, and we know

How best to hurl it down.

ALL. Come! Down with it!

[*They fall upon the building on every side.*

FÜRST. The floodgate's burst. They're not to be restrained.

[*Enter MELCHTHAL and BAUMGARTEN.*

MELCH. What! Stands the fortress still, when Sarnen lies

In ashes, and the Rossberg's in our hands?

FÜRST. You, Melchthal, here? D'ye bring us liberty?

Are all the cantons from our tyrants freed?

MELCH. We've swept them from the soil. Rejoice, my friend,

Now, at this very moment, while we speak,
There's not one tyrant left in Switzerland!

FÜRST. How did you get the forts into your power?

MELCH. Rudenz it was who by a bold assault
With manly valour mastered Sarnen's keep.
The Rossberg I had storm'd the night before.
But hear, what chanced. Scarce had we driven the foe
Forth from the keep, and given it to the flames,
That now rose crackling upward to the skies,
When from the blaze rush'd Diethelm, Gessler's page,
Exclaiming, "Lady Bertha will be burnt!"

FÜRST. Good heavens!

[*The beams of the scaffold are heard falling.*]

MELCH. 'Twas she herself. Here had she been
By Gessler's orders secretly immured.
Up sprang Rudenz in frenzy. For even now
The beams and massive posts were crashing down,
And through the stifling smoke the piteous shrieks
Of the unhappy lady.

FÜRST. Is she saved?

MELCH. 'Twas not a time to hesitate or pause!
Had he been but our baron, and no more,
We should have been most chary of our lives;
But he was our confederate, and Bertha
Honoured the people. So, without a thought,
We risk'd the worst, and rush'd into the flames.

FÜRST. But is she saved?

MELCH. She is. Rudenz and I
Bore her between us from the blazing pile,
With crashing timbers toppling all around.
And when she had revived, the danger past,
And raised her eyes to look upon the sun,

The baron fell upon my breast ; and then
 A silent vow between us two was sworn,
 A vow that, welded in yon furnace heat,
 Will last through ev'ry shock of time and fate.

FÜRST. Where is the Landenberg ?

MELCH.

Across the Brünig.

'Twas not my fault he bore his sight away,
 He who had robb'd my father of his eyes !
 He fled — I followed — overtook him soon,
 And dragg'd him to my father's feet. The sword
 Already quiver'd o'er the caitiff's head,
 When from the pity of the blind old man,
 He wrung the life which, craven-like, he begged.
 He swore URPHÉDE,¹ never to return :
 He'll keep his oath, for he has felt our arm.

FÜRST. Oh, well for you, you have not stain'd with
 blood

Our spotless victory !

CHILDREN. (*running across the stage with fragments
 of wood*) We're free ! we're free !

FÜRST. Oh ! what a joyous scene ! These children
 will

Remember it when all their heads are gray.

[*Girls bring in the cap upon a pole. The whole
 stage is filled with people.*

RUODI. Here is the cap, to which we were to bow !

BAUM. What shall we do with it ? Do you decide !

FÜRST. Heavens ! 'Twas beneath this cap my
 grandson stood !

SEVERAL VOICES. Destroy the emblem of the ty-
 rant's power !

Let it be burnt !

FÜRST. No. Rather be preserved ;

¹ The URPHÉDE was an oath of peculiar force. When a man, who was at feud with another, invaded his lands and was worsted, he often made terms with his enemy by swearing the *Urphede*, by which he bound himself to depart, and never to return with a hostile intention.

'Twas once the instrument of despots — now
'Twill of our freedom be a lasting sign.

[Peasants, men, women, and children, some standing, others sitting upon the beams of the shattered scaffold, all picturesquely grouped, in a large semicircle.]

MELCH. Thus now, my friends, with light and merry hearts,

We stand upon the wreck of tyranny;
And gloriously the work has been fulfilled,
Which we at Rootli pledged ourselves to do.

FÜRST. No, not fulfilled. The work is but begun:
Courage and concord firm, we need them both;
For, be assured, the king will make all speed
To avenge his viceroy's death, and reinstate,
By force of arms, the tyrant we've expell'd.

MELCH. Why let him come, with all his armaments!
The foe's expelled that press'd us from within,
The foe without we are prepared to meet!

RUODI. The passes to our cantons are but few;
These with our bodies we will block, we will!

BAUM. Knit are we by a league will ne'er be rent,
And all his armies shall not make us quail.

[Enter RÖSSELMANN and STAUFFACHER.]

RÖSSEL. *(speaking as he enters)* These are the
awful judgments of the Lord!

PEAS. What is the matter?

RÖSSEL. In what times we live!

FÜRST. Say on, what is't? Ha, Werner, is it you?
What tidings?

PEAS. What's the matter?

RÖSSEL. Hear and wonder!

STAUFF. We are released from one great cause of
dread.

RÖSSEL. The emperor is murdered.

FÜRST. Gracious Heaven!

[Peasants rise up and throng round STAUFFACHER.]

ALL. Murder'd! — the emp'ror! What! The
emp'ror! Hear!

MELCH. Impossible! How came you by the news?

STAUFF. 'Tis true! Near Bruck, by the assassin's
hand,

King Albert fell. A most trustworthy man,
John Müller, from Schaffhausen, brought the news.

FÜRST. Who dared commit so horrible a deed?

STAUFF. The doer makes the deed more dreadful
still;

It was his nephew, his own brother's son,
Duke John of Austria, who struck the blow.

MELCH. What drove him to so dire a parricide?

STAUFF. The emp'ror kept his patrimony back,
Despite his urgent importunities;

'Twas said, he meant to keep it for himself,

And with a mitre to appease the duke.

However this may be, the duke gave ear

To the ill counsel of his friends in arms;

And with the noble lords, Von Eschenbach,

Von Tegerfeld, Von Wart and Palm, resolved,

Since his demands for justice were despised,

With his own hands to take revenge at least.

FÜRST. But say — the dreadful deed, how was it
done?

STAUFF. The king was riding down from Stein to
Baden.

Upon his way to join the court at Rheinfeld, —

With him a train of high-born gentlemen,

And the young princes John and Leopold;

And when they'd reach'd the ferry of the Reuss,

The assassins forced their way into the boat,

To separate the emperor from his suite.

His Highness landed, and was riding on

Across a fresh plough'd field — where once, they say,

A mighty city stood in pagan times —

With Habsburg's ancient turrets full in sight,

That was the cradle of his princely race,
When Duke John plunged a dagger in his throat,
Palm ran him thro' the body with a lance,
And Eschenbach, to end him, clove his skull;
So down he sank, all weltering in his blood,
On his own soil, by his own kinsmen slain.
Those on the opposite bank beheld the deed,
But, parted by the stream, could only raise
An unavailing cry of loud lament.

A poor old woman, sitting by the way,
Raised him, and on her breast he bled to death.

MELCH. Thus has he dug his own untimely grave,
Who sought insatiably to grasp at all.

STAUFF. The country round is fill'd with dire alarm,
The passes are blockaded everywhere,
And sentinels on ev'ry frontier set;
E'en ancient Zurich barricades her gates,
That have stood open for these thirty years,
Dreading the murd'ers and th' avengers more.
For cruel Agnes comes, the Hungarian queen,
By all her sex's tenderness untouch'd,
Arm'd with the thunders of the ban, to wreak
Dire vengeance for her parent's royal blood
On the whole race of those that murder'd him, —
Their servants, children, children's children, — yea,
Upon the stones that built their castle walls.
Deep has she sworn a vow to immolate
Whole generations on her father's tomb,
And bathe in blood as in the dew of May.

MELCH. Is't known which way the murderers have
fled?

STAUFF. No sooner had they done the deed, than
they
Took flight, each following a different route,
And parted ne'er to see each other more.
Duke John must still be wand'ring in the moun-
tains

FÜRST. And thus their crime has borne no fruit
for them.

Revenge bears never fruit. Itself, it is
The dreadful food it feeds on ; its delight
Is murder — its satiety despair.

STAUFF. The assassins reap no profit by their crime ;
But we shall pluck with unpolluted hands
The teeming fruits of their most bloody deed.
For we are ransomed from our heaviest fear ;
The direst foe of liberty has fallen,
And, 'tis reported, that the crown will pass
From Habsburg's house into another line ;
The empire is determined to assert
Its old prerogative of choice, I hear.

FÜRST *and several others.* Is any named ?

STAUFF. The Count of Luxembourg's
Already chosen by the general voice.

FÜRST. 'Tis well we stood so staunchly by the
empire !

Now we may hope for justice, and with cause.

STAUFF. The emperor will need some valiant friends.
He will 'gainst Austria's vengeance be our shield.

[*The peasantry embrace. Enter SACRISTAN with
Imperial Messenger.*]

SACRIST. Here are the worthy chiefs of Switzer-
land !

RÖSSEL. *and several others.* Sacrist, what news ?

SACRIST. A courier brings this letter.

ALL. (*to WALTER FÜRST*) Open and read it.

FÜRST. (*reading*) "To the worthy men
Of Uri, Schwytz, and Unterwald, the Queen
Elizabeth sends grace and all good wishes !"

MANY VOICES. What wants the queen with us ?
Her reign is done.

FÜRST. (*reads*) "In the great grief and doleful
widowhood,
In which the bloody exit of her lord

Has plunged the queen, still in her mind she bears
The ancient faith and love of Switzerland."

MELCH. She ne'er did that in her prosperity.

RÖSSEL. Hush, let us hear!

FÜRST. (*reads*) "And she is well assured,
Her people will in due abhorrence hold
The perpetrators of this damned deed.
On the three cantons, therefore, she relies,
That they in nowise lend the murderers aid;
But rather, that they loyally assist
To give them up to the avenger's hand,
Remembering the love and grace which they
Of old received from Rudolph's royal house."

[*Symptoms of dissatisfaction among the peasantry.*]

MANY VOICES. The love and grace!

STAUFF. Grace from the father we, indeed, received;
But what have we to boast of from the son?
Did he confirm the charter of our freedom,
As all preceding emperors had done?
Did he judge righteous judgment, or afford
Shelter, or stay, to innocence oppress'd?
Nay, did he e'en give audience to the men
We sent to lay our grievances before him?
Not one of all these things did the king do,
And had we not ourselves achieved our rights
By our own stalwart hands, the wrongs we bore
Had never touch'd him. Gratitude to him!
Within these vales he sowed no seeds of that;
He stood upon an eminence — he might
Have been a very father to his people,
But all his aim and pleasure was to raise
Himself and his own house: and now may those
Whom he has aggrandised lament for him.

FÜRST. We will not triumph in his fall, nor now
Recall to mind the wrongs that we endured.
Far be't from us! Yet, that we should avenge
The sovereign's death, who never did us good,

And hunt down those who ne'er molested us,
 Becomes us not, nor is our duty. Love
 Must be a tribute free and unconstrain'd;
 From all enforced duties death absolves,
 And unto him we owe no further debt.

MELCH. And if the queen laments within her
 bower,

Accusing Heaven in sorrow's wild despair,
 Here see a people, from its anguish freed,
 To that same Heav'n send up its thankful praise.
 Who would reap tears, must sow the seeds of love.

[*Exit the Imperial Courier.*]

STAUFF. (*to the people*) But where is Tell? Shall
 he, our freedom's founder,

Alone be absent from our festival?
 He did the most — endured the worst of all.
 Come — to his dwelling let us all repair,
 And bid the saviour of our country hail!

[*Exeunt omnes.*]

SCENE II.

*Interior of TELL'S cottage. A fire burning on the hearth.
 The open door shows the scene outside.*

HEDWIG, WALTER, and WILHELM.

HEDW. My own dear boys! your father comes
 to-day;

He lives, is free, and we, and all are free;
 The country owes its liberty to him!

WALT. And I, too, mother, bore my part in it!
 I must be named with him. My father's shaft
 Ran my life close, but yet I never flinch'd.

HEDW. (*embracing him*) Yes, yes, thou art re-
 stored to me again!

Twice have I seen thee given to my sad eyes,

Twice suffered all a mother's pangs for thee !
 But this is past — I have you both, boys, both !
 And your dear father will be back to-day.

[A MONK appears at the door.]

WILH. See, mother, yonder stands a holy friar ;
 He comes for alms, no doubt.

HEDW. Go lead him in,
 That we may give him cheer, and make him feel
 That he has come into the house of joy.

[Exit, and returns immediately with a cup.]

WILH. (to the MONK) Come in, good man. Mother
 will give you food !

WALT. Come in and rest, then go refresh'd away !

MONK. (glancing around in terror, with unquiet
 looks) Where am I ? In what country ?
 Tell me.

WALT. How !

Are you bewildered, that you know not where ?
 You are at Bürglen, in the land of Uri,
 Just at the entrance of the Shechenthal.

MONK. (to HEDWIG) Are you alone ? Your hus-
 band, is he here ?

HEDW. I am expecting him. But what ails you,
 man ?

There's something in your looks that omens ill !
 Whoe'er you be, you are in want — take that.

[Offers him the cup.]

MONK. Howe'er my sinking heart may yearn for
 food,

Nought will I taste till you have promised first —

HEDW. Touch not my garments, come not near me,
 monk !

You must stand farther back, if I'm to hear you.

MONK. Oh, by this hearth's bright hospitable
 blaze,

By your dear children's heads, which I embrace —

[Grasps the boys.]

HEDW. Stand back, I say! What is your purpose, man?

Back from my boys! You are no monk, — no, no,

Beneath the robe you wear peace should abide,
But peace abides not in such looks as yours.

MONK. I am the wretchedest of living men.

HEDW. The heart is never deaf to wretchedness;
But your look freezes up my inmost soul.

WALT. (*springs up*) Mother, here's father!

HEDW. Oh, my God!

[*Is about to follow, trembles, and stops.*

WILH. (*running after his brother*) My father!

WALT. (*without*) Here, here once more!

WILH. (*without*) My father, my dear father!

TELL. (*without*) Yes, here once more! Where is your mother, boys? [*They enter.*

WALT. There at the door she stands, and can no further,

She trembles so with terror and with joy.

TELL. Oh, Hedwig, Hedwig, mother of my children,
God has been kind and helpful in our woes.

No tyrant's hand shall e'er divide us more.

HEDW. (*falling on his neck*) Oh, Tell, what anguish have I borne for thee!

[*MONK becomes attentive.*

TELL. Forget it now, and live for joy alone!

I'm here again with you! This is my cot!

I stand again upon mine own hearthstone!

WILH. But, father, where's your crossbow? Not with you?

TELL. Thou shalt not ever see it more, my boy.
Within a holy shrine it has been placed,
And in the chase shall ne'er be used again.

HEDW. Oh, Tell! Tell!

[*Steps back, dropping his hand.*

TELL. What alarms thee, dearest wife?

HEDW. How — how dost thou return to me? This hand —

Dare I take hold of it? This hand — Oh God!

TELL. (*with firmness and animation*) Has shielded you and set my country free;

Freely I raise it in the face of Heaven.

[MONK gives a sudden start — he looks at him.]

Who is this friar here?

HEDW. Ah, I forgot him;

Speak thou with him; I shudder at his presence.

MONK. (*stepping nearer*) Are you the Tell who slew the governor?

TELL. Yes, I am he. I hide the fact from no man.

MONK. And you are Tell! Ah! it is God's own hand

That hath conducted me beneath your roof.

TELL. (*examining him closely*) You are no monk.

Who are you?

MONK. You have slain

The governor, who did you wrong. I, too,

Have slain a foe who robb'd me of my rights.

He was no less your enemy than mine.

I've rid the land of him.

TELL. (*drawing back*) You are — oh, horror!

In — children, children — in, without a word,

Go, my dear wife! Go! Go! Unhappy man,

You should be —

HEDW. Heav'ns, who is it?

TELL. Do not ask.

Away! away! the children must not hear it.

Out of the house — away! You must not rest

'Neath the same roof with this unhappy man!

HEDW. Alas! What is it? Come.

[*Exit with the children.*]

TELL. (*to the MONK*)

You are the Duke

Of Austria — I know it. You have slain

The emperor, your uncle, and liege lord.

JOHN. He robb'd me of my patrimony.

TELL. How!

Slain him — your king, your uncle! And the earth
Still bears you! And the sun still shines on you!

JOHN. Tell, hear me, ere you —

TELL. Reeking with the blood
Of him that was your emperor, your kinsman,
Dare you set foot within my spotless house,
Dare to an honest man to show your face,
And claim the rites of hospitality?

JOHN. I hoped to find compassion at your hands.
You took, like me, revenge upon your foe!

TELL. Unhappy man! Dare you confound the
crime

Of blood-imbrued ambition with the act
Forced on a father in mere self-defence?
Had you to shield your children's darling heads,
To guard your fireside's sanctuary — ward off
The last, the direst doom from all you loved?
To Heaven I raise my unpolluted hands,
To curse your act and you! I have avenged
That holy nature which you have profaned.
I have no part with you. You murdered, I
Have shielded all that was most dear to me.

JOHN. You cast me off to comfortless despair!

TELL. I shrink with horror while I talk with you.
Hence, on the dread career you have begun!
Cease to pollute the home of innocence!

[JOHN turns to depart.

JOHN. I cannot and I will not live this life!

TELL. And yet my soul bleeds for you. Gracious
Heaven,

So young, of such a noble line, the grandson
Of Rudolph, once my lord and emperor,
An outcast — murderer — standing at my door,
The poor man's door — a suppliant, in despair!

[Covers his face.

JOHN. If you have power to weep, oh, let my fate
Move your compassion — it is horrible.
I am — say, rather was — a prince. I might
Have been most happy, had I only curb'd
The impatience of my passionate desires:
But envy gnaw'd my heart — I saw the youth
Of mine own cousin Leopold endow'd
With honour, and enrich'd with broad domains,
The while myself, of equal age with him,
In abject slavish nonage was kept back.

TELL. Unhappy man, your uncle knew you well,
When from you land and subjects he withheld!
You, by your mad and desperate act, have set
A fearful seal upon his wise resolve.
Where are the bloody partners of your crime?

JOHN. Where'er the avenging furies may have borne
 them;
I have not seen them since the luckless deed.

TELL. Know you the empire's ban is out, — that you
Are interdicted to your friends, and given
An outlaw'd victim to your enemies!

JOHN. Therefore I shun all public thoroughfares,
And venture not to knock at any door —
I turn my footsteps to the wilds, and through
The mountains roam, a terror to myself.
From mine own self I shrink with horror back,
If in a brook I see my ill-starr'd form.
If you have pity or a human heart —

[Falls down before him.]

TELL. Stand up, stand up! I say.

JOHN. Not till you give
Your hand in promise of assistance to me.

TELL. Can I assist you? Can a sinful man?
Yet get ye up — how black soe'er your crime —
You are a man. I, too, am one. From Tell
Shall no one part uncomforted. I will
Do all that lies within my power.

JOHN. (*springs up and grasps him ardently by the hand*) Oh, Tell,
You save me from the terrors of despair.

TELL. Let go my hand! You must away. You cannot
Remain here undiscover'd, and, discover'd,
You cannot count on succour. Which way, then,
Would you be going? Where do you hope to find
A place of rest?

JOHN. Alas! I know not where.

TELL. Hear, then, what Heaven unto my heart
suggests.

You must to Italy, — to Saint Peter's city —
There cast yourself at the Pope's feet, — confess
Your guilt to him, and ease your laden soul!

JOHN. Will he not to the avengers yield me up?

TELL. Whate'er he does, accept it as from God.

JOHN. But how am I to reach that unknown
land?

I have no knowledge of the way, and dare not
Attach myself to other travellers.

TELL. I will describe the road, so mark me well!
You must ascend, keeping along the Reuss,
Which from the mountains dashes wildly down.

JOHN. (*in alarm*) What! See the Reuss? The
witness of my deed!

TELL. The road you take lies through the river's
gorge,

And many a cross proclaims where travellers
Have been by avalanches done to death.

JOHN. I have no fear for nature's terrors, so
I can appease the torments of my soul.

TELL. At every cross, kneel down and expiate
Your crime with burning penitential tears —
And if you 'scape the perils of the pass,
And are not whelm'd beneath the drifted snows,
That from the frozen peaks come sweeping down,

You'll reach the bridge that's drench'd with drizzling
spray.

Then if it give not way beneath your guilt,
When you have left it safely in your rear,
Before you frowns the gloomy Gate of Rocks,
Where never sun did shine. Proceed through this,
And you will reach a bright and gladsome vale.
Yet must you hurry on with hasty steps,
You must not linger in the haunts of peace.

JOHN. O Rudolph, Rudolph, royal grandsire! thus
Thy grandson first sets foot within thy realms!

TELL. Ascending still, you gain the Gotthardt's
heights,

Where are the tarns, the everlasting tarns,
That from the streams of heaven itself are fed;
There to the German soil you bid farewell,
And thence, with swift descent, another stream
Leads you to Italy, your promised land.

[*Ranz des Vaches sounded on Alp-horns is heard
without.*]

But I hear voices. Hence!

HEDW. (*hurrying in*) Where art thou, Tell?
My father comes, and in exulting bands
All the confederates approach.

JOHN. (*covering himself*) Woe's me!
I dare not tarry 'mong these happy men!

TELL. Go, dearest wife, and give this man to eat.
Spare not your bounty; for his road is long,
And one where shelter will be hard to find.
Quick — they approach!

HEDW. Who is he?

TELL. Do not ask!

And when he quits you, turn your eyes away,
So that they do not see which way he goes.

[DUKE JOHN advances hastily toward TELL, but he
beckons him aside and exit. When both have
left the stage, the scene changes, and discloses in

SCENE III.

The whole valley before TELL's house, the heights which enclose it occupied by peasants, grouped into tableaux. Some are seen crossing a lofty bridge, which crosses the Shechen. WALTER FÜRST with the two boys. WERNER and STAUFFACHER come forward. Others throng after them. When TELL appears, all receive him with loud cheers.

ALL. Long live brave Tell, our shield, our saviour!

[While those in front are crowding round TELL, and embracing him, RUDENZ and BERTHA appear. The former salutes the peasantry, the latter embraces HEDWIG. The music from the mountains continues to play. When it has stopped, BERTHA steps into the centre of the crowd.]

BERTH. Peasants! Confederates! Into your league
Receive me, who was happily the first
That found deliverance in the land of freedom.
To your brave hands I now entrust my rights.
Will you protect me as your citizen?

PEAS. Ay, that we will, with life and goods!

BERTH. 'Tis well!
And now to him (*turning to Rudenz*) I frankly give
my hand,

A free Swiss maiden to a free Swiss man!

RUD. And from this moment all my serfs are free!
[Music and the curtain falls.]

Demetrius

Demetrius

ACT I.

SCENE I.

THE DIET AT CRACOW.

On the rising of the curtain the Polish Diet is discovered, seated in the great senate hall. On a raised platform, elevated by three steps, and surmounted by a canopy, is the imperial throne, the escutcheons of Poland and Lithuania suspended on each side. The KING seated upon the throne; on his right and left hand his ten royal officers standing on the platform. Below the platform the BISHOPS, PALATINES, and CASTELLANS seated on each side of the stage. Opposite to these stand the Provincial DEPUTIES, in a double line, uncovered. All armed. The ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN, as the primate of the kingdom, is seated next the proscenium: his chaplain behind him, bearing a golden cross.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. Thus then hath this tempestuous Diet been
Conducted safely to a prosperous close;
And king and commons part as cordial friends.
The nobles have consented to disarm,

And straight disband the dangerous Rocoss;¹
 Whilst our good king his sacred word has pledged,
 That every just complaint shall have redress.
 And now that all is peace at home, we may
 Look to the things that claim our care abroad.
 Is it the will of the most high Estates
 That Prince Demetrius, who hath advanced
 A claim to Russia's crown, as Ivan's son,
 Should at their bar appear, and in the face
 Of this august assembly prove his right?

CASTELLAN OF CRACOW. Honour and justice both
 demand he should;

It were unseemly to refuse his prayer.

BISHOP OF WERMELAND. The documents on which
 he rests have been
 Examined, and are found authentic. We
 May give him audience.

SEVERAL DEPUTIES. Nay! We must, we must!

LEO SAPIEHA. To hear is to admit his right.

ODOWALSKY. And not
 To hear is to reject his claims unheard.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. Is it your will that he
 have audience?

I ask it for the second time — and third.

IMPERIAL CHANCELLOR. Let him stand forth before
 our throne!

SENATORS. And speak!

DEPUTIES. Yes, yes! Let him be heard!

[*The Imperial GRAND MARSHAL beckons with his
 baton to the doorkeeper, who goes out.*]

LEO SAPIEHA. (*to the CHANCELLOR*) Write down,
 my lord,

That here I do protest against this step,
 And all that may ensue therefrom, to mar
 The peace of Poland's state and Moscow's crown.

¹ An insurrectionary muster of the nobles.

[*Enters DEMETRIUS. Advances some steps toward the throne, and makes three bows with his head uncovered, first to the KING, next to the SENATORS, and then to the DEPUTIES, who all severally answer with an inclination of the head. He then takes up his position so as to keep within his eye a great portion of the assemblage, and yet not to turn his back upon the throne.*

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. Prince Dmitri, son of Ivan! if the pomp

Of this great Diet scare thee, or a sight
So noble and majestic chain thy tongue,
Thou may'st — for this the senate have allowed —
Choose thee a proxy, wheresoe'er thou list,
And do thy mission by another's lips.

DEMETRIUS. My lord archbishop, I stand here to claim

A kingdom, and the state of royalty.
'Twould ill beseem me should I quake before
A noble people, and its king and senate.
I ne'er have viewed a circle so august,
But the sight swells my heart within my breast
And not appals me. The more worthy ye,
To me ye are more welcome; I can ne'er
Address my claim to nobler auditory.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. The august republic
Is favourably bent.

DEMETRIUS. Most puissant king! Most worthy
and most potent

Bishops and palatines, and my good lords,
The deputies of the august republic!
It gives me pause and wonder to behold
Myself, Czar Ivan's son, now stand before
The Polish people in their Diet here.
Both realms were sundered by a bloody hate,
And, whilst my father lived, no peace might be.

Yet now hath Heaven so ordered these events,
 That I, his blood, who with my nurse's milk
 Imbided the ancestral hate, appear before you
 A fugitive, compelled to seek my rights
 Even here in Poland's heart. Then, ere I speak,
 Forget magnanimously all rancours past,
 And that the Czar, whose son I own myself,
 Rolled war's red billows to your very homes.
 I stand before you, sirs, a prince despoiled.
 I ask protection. The oppressed may urge
 A sacred claim on every noble breast.
 And who in all earth's circuit shall be just,
 If not a people great and valiant, — one
 In plenitude of power so free, it needs
 To render 'count but to itself alone,
 And may, unchallenged, lend an open ear
 And aiding hand to fair humanity.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. You do allege you are
 Czar Ivan's son ;

And truly, nor your bearing nor your speech
 Gainsays the lofty title that you urge,
 But shows us that you are indeed his son.
 And you shall find that the republic bears
 A generous spirit. She has never quailed
 To Russia in the field ! She loves, alike,
 To be a noble foe — a cordial friend.

DEMETRIUS. Ivan Wasilowitch, the mighty Czar
 Of Moscow, took five spouses to his bed,
 In the long years that spared him to the throne.
 The first, a lady of the heroic line
 Of Romanoff, bare him Feodor, who reigned
 After his father's death. One only son,
 Dmitri, the last blossom of his strength,
 And a mere infant when his father died,
 Was born of Marfa, of Nagori's line.
 Czar Feodor, a youth, alike effeminate
 In mind and body, left the reins of power

To his chief equerry, Boris Godunow,
Who ruled his master with most crafty skill.
Feodor was childless, and his barren bride
Denied all prospect of an heir. Thus, when
The wily Boiar, by his fawning arts,
Had coiled himself into the people's favour,
His wishes soared as high as to the throne.
Between him and his haughty hopes there stood
A youthful prince, the young Demetrius
Iwanowitsch, who with his mother lived
At Uglitsch, where her widowhood was passed.
Now, when his fatal purpose was matured,
He sent to Uglitsch ruffians, charged to put
The Czarowitch to death.

One night, when all was hushed, the castle's wing,
Where the young prince, apart from all the rest,
With his attendants lay, was found on fire.
The raging flames engulfed the pile; the prince
Unseen, unheard, was spirited away,
And all the world lamented him as dead.
All Moscow knows these things to be the truth.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. Yes, these are facts familiar to us all.

The rumour ran abroad, both far and near,
That Prince Demetrius perished in the flames
When Uglitsch was destroyed. And, as his death
Raised to the throne the Czar who fills it now,
Fame did not hesitate to charge on him
This murder foul and pitiless. But yet,
His death is not the business now in hand!
This prince is living still! He lives in you!
So runs your plea. Now bring us to the proofs!
Whereby do you attest that you are he?
What are the signs by which you shall be known?
How 'scaped you those were sent to hunt you down
And now, when sixteen years are passed, and you
Well-nigh forgot, emerge to light once more?

DEMETRIUS. 'Tis scarce a year since I have known
myself;

I lived a secret to myself till then,
Surmising naught of my imperial birth.
I was a monk with monks, close pent within
The cloister's precincts, when I first began
To waken to a consciousness of self.
My impetuous spirit chafed against the bars,
And the high blood of princes began to course
In strange unbidden moods along my veins.
At length I flung the monkish cowl aside,
And fled to Poland, where the noble Prince
Of Sendomir, the generous, the good,
Took me as guest into his princely house,
And trained me up to noble deeds of arms.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. How? You still ignorant
of what you were?

Yet ran the rumour then on every side,
That Prince Demetrius was still alive.
Czar Boris trembled on his throne, and sent
His sassafs to the frontiers, to keep
Sharp watch on every traveller that stirred.
Had not the tale its origin with you?
Did you not give the rumour birth yourself?
Had you not named to any that you were
Demetrius?

DEMETRIUS. I relate that which I know.
If a report went forth I was alive,
Then had some god been busy with the fame.
Myself I knew not. In the prince's house,
And in the throng of his retainers lost,
I spent the pleasant springtime of my youth.

In silent homage

My heart was vowed to his most lovely daughter.
Yet in those days it never dreamed to raise
Its wildest thoughts to happiness so high.
My passion gave offence to her betrothed,

The Castellan of Lemberg. He with taunts
Chafed me, and in the blindness of his rage
Forgot himself so wholly as to strike me.
Thus savagely provoked, I drew my sword;
He, blind with fury, rushed upon the blade,
And perished there by my unwitting hand.

MEISCHEK. Yes, it was even so.

DEMETRIUS. Mine was the worst mischance! A
nameless youth,

A Russian and a stranger, I had slain
A grandee of the empire — in the house
Of my kind patron done a deed of blood,
And sent to death his son-in-law and friend.
My innocence availed not; not the pity
Of all his household, nor his kindness — his,
The noble Palatine's, — could save my life;
For it was forfeit to the law, that is,
Though lenient to the Poles, to strangers stern.
Judgment was passed on me — that judgment death.
I knelt upon the scaffold, by the block;
To the fell headsman's sword I bared my throat,
And in the act disclosed a cross of gold,
Studded with precious gems, which had been hung
About my neck at the baptismal font.
This sacred pledge of Christian redemption
I had, as is the custom of my people,
Worn on my neck concealed, where'er I went,
From my first hours of infancy; and now,
When from sweet life I was compelled to part,
I grasped it as my only stay, and pressed it
With passionate devotion to my lips.

[*The Poles intimate their sympathy by dumb show*
The jewel was observed; its sheen and worth
Awakened curiosity and wonder.
They set me free, and questioned me; yet still
I could not call to memory a time
I had not worn the jewel on my person.

Now it so happened that three Boiars who
Had fled from the resentment of their Czar
Were on a visit to my lord at Sambor.
They saw the trinket, — recognised it by
Nine emeralds alternately inlaid
With amethysts, to be the very cross
Which Ivan Westislowsky at the font
Hung on the neck of the Czar's youngest son.
They scrutinised me closer, and were struck
To find me marked with one of nature's freaks,
For my right arm is shorter than my left.
Now, being closely plied with questions, I
Bethought me of a little psalter which
I carried from the cloister when I fled.
Within this book were certain words in Greek
Inscribed there by the Igumen himself.
What they imported was unknown to me,
Being ignorant of the language. Well, the psalter
Was sent for, brought, and the inscription read.
It bore that Brother Wasili Philaret
(Such was my cloister-name), who owned the book,
Was Prince Demetrius, Ivan's youngest son,
By Andrei, an honest Diak, saved
By stealth in that red night of massacre.
Proofs of the fact lay carefully preserved
Within two convents, which were pointed out.
On this the Boiars at my feet fell down,
Won by the force of these resistless proofs,
And hailed me as the offspring of their Czar.
So from the yawning gulfs of black despair
Fate raised me up to fortune's topmost heights.
And now the mists cleared off, and all at once
Memories on memories started into life
In the remotest background of the past.
And like some city's spires that gleam afar
In golden sunshine when naught else is seen,
So in my soul two images grew bright,

The loftiest sun-peaks in the shadowy past.
 I saw myself escaping one dark night,
 And a red lurid flame light up the gloom.
 Of midnight darkness as I looked behind me.
 A memory 'twas of very earliest youth,
 For what preceded or came after it,
 In the long distance utterly was lost.
 In solitary brightness there it stood,
 A ghastly beacon-light on memory's waste.
 Yet I remembered how, in later years,
 One of my comrades called me in his wrath
 Son of the Czar. I took it as a jest,
 And with a blow avenged it at the time.
 All this now flashed like lightning on my soul,
 And told with dazzling certainty that I
 Was the Czar's son, so long reputed dead.
 With this one word the clouds that had perplexed
 My strange and troubled life were cleared away.
 Nor merely by these signs, for such deceive ;
 But in my soul, in my proud throbbing heart,
 I felt within me coursed the blood of kings ;
 And sooner will I drain it drop by drop
 Than bate one jot my title to the crown.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. And shall we trust a scroll
 which might have found
 Its way by merest chance into your hands,
 Backed by the tale of some poor renegades ?
 Forgive me, noble youth ! Your tone, I grant,
 And bearing, are not those of one who lies ;
 Still you in this may be yourself deceived.
 Well may the heart be pardoned that beguiles
 Itself in playing for so high a stake.
 What hostage do you tender for your word ?

DEMETRIUS. I tender fifty, who will give their
 oaths, —
 All Piasts to a man, and free-born Poles
 Of spotless reputation, — each of whom

Is ready to enforce what I have urged.
 There sits the noble Prince of Sendomir,
 And at his side the Castellan of Lublin;
 Let them declare if I have spoke the truth.

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. How seem these things to
 the august Estates?

To the enforcement of such numerous proofs
 Doubt and mistrust, methinks, must needs give way.
 Long has a creeping rumour filled the world
 That Dmitri, Ivan's son, is still alive.
 The Czar himself confirms it by his fears.
 — Before us stands a youth, in age and mien
 Even to the very freak that nature played,
 The lost heir's counterpart, and of a soul
 Whose noble stamp keeps rank with his high claims.
 He left a cloister's precincts, urged by strange,
 Mysterious promptings; and this monk-trained boy
 Was straight distinguished for his knightly feats.
 He shows a trinket which the Czarowitch
 Once wore, and one that never left his side;
 A written witness, too, by pious hands,
 Gives us assurance of his princely birth;
 And stronger still, from his unvarnished speech
 And open brow truth makes his best appeal.
 Such traits as these deceit doth never don;
 It masks its subtle soul in vaunting words,
 And in the high-glossed ornaments of speech.
 No longer, then, can I withhold the title
 Which he with circumstance and justice claims.
 And, in the exercise of my old right,
 I now, as primate, give him the first voice.

ARCHBISHOP OF LEMBERG. My voice goes with the
 primate's.

SEVERAL VOICES. So does mine.

SEVERAL PALATINES. And mine.

ODOWALSKY. And mine.

DEPUTIES. And all!

SAPIEHA.

My gracious sirs!

Weigh well ere you decide! Be not so hasty!

It is not meet the council of the realm

Be hurried on to —

ODOWALSKY. There is nothing here

For us to weigh; all has been fully weighed.

The proofs demonstrate incontestably.

This is not Moscow, sirs! No despot here

Keeps our free souls in manacles. Here truth

May walk by day or night with brow erect.

I will not think, my lords, in Cracow here,

Here in the very Diet of the Poles,

That Moscow's Czar should have obsequious slaves.

DEMETRIUS. Oh, take my thanks, ye reverend
senators!

That ye have lent your credence to these proofs;

And if I be indeed the man whom I

Protest myself, oh, then, endure not this

Audacious robber should usurp my seat,

Or longer desecrate that sceptre which

To me, as the true Czarowitch, belongs.

Yes, justice lies with me, — you have the power.

'Tis the most dear concern of every state

And throne, that right should everywhere prevail,

And all men in the world possess their own.

For there, where justice holds uncumbered sway,

There each enjoys his heritage secure,

And over every house and every throne

Law, truth, and order keep their angel watch.

It is the keystone of the world's wide arch,

The one sustaining and sustained by all,

Which, if it fail, brings all in ruin down.

(*Answers of SENATORS giving assent to DEMETRIUS.*)

DEMETRIUS. Oh, look on me, renowned Sigis-
mund!

Great king, on thine own bosom turn thine eyes.

And in my destiny behold thine own.

Thou, too, hast known the rude assaults of fate;
 Within a prison camest thou to the world;
 Thy earliest glances fell on dungeon walls.
 Thou, too, hadst need of friends to set thee free,
 And raise thee from a prison to a throne.
 These didst thou find. That noble kindness thou
 Didst reap from them, oh, testify to me.
 And you, ye grave and honoured councillors,
 Most reverend bishops, pillars of the Church,
 Ye palatines and castellans of fame,
 The moment has arrived, by one high deed,
 To reconcile two nations long estranged.
 Yours be the glorious boast, that Poland's power
 Hath given the Muscovites their Czar, and in
 The neighbour who oppressed you as a foe
 Secure an ever-grateful friend. And you,
 The deputies of the august republic,
 Saddle your steeds of fire! Leap to your seats!
 To you expand high fortune's golden gates;
 I will divide the foeman's spoil with you.
 Moscow is rich in plunder; measureless,
 In gold and gems, the treasures of the Czar;
 I can give royal guerdons to my friends,
 And I will give them, too. When I, as Czar,
 Set foot within the Kremlin, then, I swear,
 The poorest of you all, that follows me,
 Shall robe himself in velvet and in sables,
 With costly pearls his housings shall he deck,
 And silver be the metal of least worth,
 That he shall shoe his horses' hoofs withal.

*[Great commotion among the DEPUTIES. KORELA,
 Hetman of the Cossacks, declares himself ready
 to put himself at the head of an army.]*

ODOWALSKY. How! shall we leave the Cossack to
 despoil us
 At once of glory and of booty both?
 We've made a truce with Tartar and with Turk,

And from the Swedish power have naught to fear.
Our martial spirit has been wasting long
In slothful peace ; our swords are red with rust.
Up ! and invade the kingdom of the Czar,
And win a grateful and true-hearted friend,
Whilst we augment our country's might and glory.

MANY DEPUTIES. War ! War with Moscow !

OTHERS. Be it so resolved !

On to the votes at once !

SAPIEHA. (*rises*) Grand marshal, please
To order silence ! I desire to speak.

A CROWD OF VOICES. War ! War with Moscow

SAPIEHA. Nay, I will be heard.

Ho, marshal, do your duty !

[*Great tumult within and outside the hall.*

GRAND MARSHAL. 'Tis, you see,

Quite fruitless.

SAPIEHA. What ? The marshal's self suborned ?

Is this our Diet, then, no longer free ?

Throw down your staff, and bid this brawling cease ;

I charge you, on your office, to obey !

[*The GRAND MARSHAL casts his baton into the
centre of the hall ; the tumult abates.*

What whirling thoughts, what mad resolves are these ?

Stand we not now at peace with Moscow's Czar ?

Myself, as your imperial envoy, made

A treaty to endure for twenty years ;

I raised this right hand, that you see, aloft

In solemn pledge, within the Kremlin's walls ;

And fairly hath the Czar maintained his word.

What is sworn faith ? what compacts, treaties, when

A solemn Diet tramples on them all ?

DEMETRIUS. Prince Leo Sapieha ! You concluded

A bond of peace, you say, with Moscow's Czar ?

That did you not ; for I, I am that Czar.

In me is Moscow's majesty ; I am

The son of Ivan, and his rightful heir.

Would the Poles treat with Russia for a peace,
Then must they treat with me! Your compact's null,
As being made with one whose title's null.

ODOWALSKY. What reck we of your treaty? So
we willed

When it was made — our wills are changed to-day.

SAPIEHA. Is it, then, come to this? If none
beside

Will stand for justice, then, at least, will I.

I'll rend the woof of cunning into shreds,

And lay its falsehoods open to the day.

Most reverend primate! art thou, canst thou be

So simple-souled, or canst thou so dissemble?

Are ye so credulous, my lords? My liege,

Art thou so weak? Ye know not — will not
know,

Ye are the puppets of the wily Waywode

Of Sendomir, who reared this spurious Czar,

Whose measureless ambition, while we speak,

Clutches in thought the spoils of Moscow's wealth.

Is't left for me to tell you that even now

The league is made and sworn betwixt the twain, —

The pledge the Waywode's youngest daughter's hand?

And shall our great republic blindly rush

Into the perils of an unjust war,

To aggrandise the Waywode, and to crown

His daughter as the empress of the Czar?

There's not a man he has not bribed and bought.

He means to rule the Diet, well I know;

I see his faction rampant in this hall,

And, as 'twere not enough that he controlled

The Seym Walmy by a majority,

He's girt the Diet with three thousand horse,

And all Cracow is swarming like a hive

With his sworn feudal vassals. Even now

They throng the halls and chambers where we sit,

To hold our liberty of speech in awe.

Yet stirs no fear in my undaunted heart ;
And while the blood keeps current in my veins,
I will maintain the freedom of my voice !
Let those who think like men come stand by
me !

Whilst I have life shall no resolve be passed
That is at war with justice and with reason.
'Twas I that ratified the peace with Moscow,
And I will hazard life to see it kept.

ODOWALSKY. Give him no further hearing ! Take
the votes !

[*The BISHOP OF CRACOW and WILNA rise, and
descend each to his own side, to collect the votes.*

MANY. War, war with Moscow !

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. (*to SAPIEHA*) Noble sir,
give way !

You see the mass are hostile to your views ;
Then do not force a profitless division !

IMPERIAL HIGH CHANCELLOR. (*descends from the
throne to SAPIEHA*)

The king entreats you will not press the point,
Sir Waywode, to division in the Diet.

DOORKEEPER. (*aside to ODOWALSKY*) Keep a bold
front, and fearless — summon those
That wait without. All Cracow stands by you.

IMPERIAL GRAND MARSHAL. (*to SAPIEHA*) Such
excellent decrees have passed before ;
Oh, cease, and for their sake, so fraught with
good,

Unite your voice with the majority !

BISHOP OF CRACOW. (*has collected the votes on his
side*)

On this right bench are all unanimous.

SAPIEHA. And let them to a man ! Yet I say no !
I urge my veto — I break up the Diet.
Stay further progress ! Null and void are all
The resolutions passed —

[General commotion; the KING descends from the throne, the barriers are broken down, and there arises a tumultuous uproar. DEPUTIES draw their swords, and threaten SAPIEHA with them. The BISHOPS interpose, and protect him with their stoles.]

Majority?

What is it? The majority is madness;
Reason has still ranked only with the few.
What cares he for the general weal that's poor?
Has the lean beggar choice, or liberty?
To the great lords of earth, that hold the purse,
He must for bread and raiment sell his voice.
'Twere meet that voices should be weighed, not counted.
Sooner or later must the state be wrecked,
Where numbers sway and ignorance decides.

ODOWALSKY. Hark to the traitor! —

DEPUTIES. Hew him into shreds!

Down with him!

ARCHBISHOP OF GNESEN. *(snatches the crucifix out of his chaplain's hand and interposes)*

Peace, peace!

Shall native blood be in the Diet shed?

Prince Sapieha! be advised! *[To the BISHOPS.]*

Bring him away,

And interpose your bosoms as his shield!

Through this side door remove him quietly,

Or the wild mob will tear him limb from limb!

[SAPIEHA, still casting looks of defiance, is forced away by the BISHOPS, whilst the ARCHBISHOPS OF GNESEN and LEMBERG keep the DEPUTIES at bay. Amidst violent tumult and clashing of arms, the hall is emptied of all but DEMETRIUS, MEISCHEK, ODOWALSKY, and the Hetman of the Cossacks.]

ODOWALSKY. That point miscarried, —
Yet shall you not lack aid because of this:

If the republic holds the peace with Moscow,
At our own charges we shall push your claims.

KORELA. Who ever could have dreamed, that he
alone

Would hold his ground against the assembled Diet ?

MEISCHEK. The king ! the king !

[*Enter KING SIGISMUND, attended by the LORD
HIGH CHANCELLOR, the GRAND MARSHAL, and
several BISHOPS.*

KING. Let me embrace you, prince !

At length the high republic does you justice ;

My heart has done so long, and many a day.

Your fate doth move me deeply, as, indeed,

What monarch's heart but must be moved by it ?

DEMETRIUS. The past, with all its sorrows, is forgot ;
Here on your breast I feel new life begin.

KING. I love not many words ; yet what a king

May offer, who has vassals richer far

Than his poor self, that do I offer you.

You have been witness of an untoward scene,

But deem not ill of Poland's realm because

A tempest jars the vessel of the state.

MEISCHEK. When winds are wild the steersman
backs his helm

And makes for port with all the speed he may.

KING. The Diet is dissolved. Although I wished,
I could not break the treaty with the Czar.

But you have powerful friends ; and if the Pole,

At his own risk, take arms on your behalf,

Or if the Cossack choose to venture war,

They are free men, I cannot say them nay.

MEISCHEK. The whole Rocoss is under arms already.

Please it but you, my liege, the angry stream

That raved against your sovereignty may turn

Its wrath on Moscow, leaving you unscathed.

KING. The best of weapons Russia's self will give
thee ;

DEMETRIUS. Be thou, great monarch, witness of
my oath,

As, prince to prince, I pledge it here to you !
This noble lady's hand I do accept
As fortune's dearest pledge, and swear that, soon
As on my father's throne I take my seat,
I'll lead her home in triumph as my bride,
With all the state that fits a mighty queen.
And, for a dowry, to my bride I give
The principalities Pleskow and Great Neugart,
With all towns, hamlets, and in-dwellers there,
With all the rights and powers of sovereignty,
In absolute possession evermore ;
And this, my gift, will I as Czar confirm
In my free city, Moscow. Furthermore,
As compensation to her noble sire
For present charges, I engage to pay
A million ducats, Polish currency.
So help me God, and all his saints, as I
Have truly sworn this oath, and shall fulfil it.

KING. You will do so ; you never will forget
For what you are the noble Waywode's debtor ;
Who, for your wishes, perils his sure wealth,
And, for your hopes, a child his heart adores,
A friend so rare is to be rarely prized !
Then when your hopes are crowned forget not ever
The steps by which you mounted to the throne,
Nor with your garments let your heart be changed !
Think, that in Poland first you knew yourself, —
That this land gave you birth a second time.

DEMETRIUS. I have been nurtured in adversity ;
And learned to reverence the beauteous bond
Which links mankind with sympathies of love.

KING. But now you enter on a realm where all —
Use, custom, morals — are untried and strange,
In Poland here reigns freedom absolute ;
The king himself, although in pomp supreme,

Must ofttime be the serf of his noblesse ;
 But there the father's sacred power prevails,
 And in the subject finds a passive slave.

DEMETRIUS. That glorious freedom which surrounds
 me here

I will transplant into my native land,
 And turn these bond-serfs into glad-souled men ;
 Not o'er the souls of slaves will I bear rule.

KING. Do naught in haste ; but by the time be
 led !

Prince, ere we part, three lessons take from me,
 And truly follow them when thou art king.
 It is a king that gives them, old and tried,
 And they may prove of profit to thy youth.

DEMETRIUS. Oh, share thy wisdom with me ! Thou
 hast won

The reverence of a free and mighty people ;
 What must I do to earn so fair a prize ?

KING. You come from a strange land,
 Borne on the weapons of a foreign foe ;
 This first felt wrong thou hast to wash away.
 Then bear thee like a genuine son of Moscow,
 With reverence due to all her usages.
 Keep promise with the Poles, and value them,
 For thou hast need of friends on thy new throne :
 The arm that placed thee there can hurl thee down.
 Esteem them honourably, yet ape them not ;
 Strange customs thrive not in a foreign soil.
 And, whatsoe'er thou dost, revere thy mother —
 You'll find a mother —

DEMETRIUS. Oh, my liege !

KING. High claim

Hath she upon thy filial reverence.
 Do her all honour. 'Twixt thy subjects and
 Thyself she stands, a sacred, precious link.
 No human law o'errides the imperial power ;
 Nothing but nature may command its awe ;

Nor can thy people own a surer pledge
That thou art gentle, than thy filial love.
I say no more. Much yet is to be done,
Ere thou mak'st booty of the golden fleece.
Expect no easy victory!
Czar Boris rules with strong and skilful hand;
You take the field against no common man.
He that by merit hath achieved the throne
Is not puffed from his seat by popular breath;
His deeds do serve to him for ancestors.
To your good fortune I commend you now;
Already twice, as by a miracle,
Hath it redeemed you from the grasp of death;
'Twill put the finish on its work, and crown you.

[*Exeunt omnes but MARINA and ODOWALSKY*

ODOWALSKY. Say, lady, how have I fulfilled my
charge?

Truly and well, and wilt thou laud my zeal?

MARINA. 'Tis, Odowalsky, well we are alone;
Matters of weight have we to canvass which
'Tis meet the prince know nothing of. May he
Pursue the voice divine that goads him on!
If in himself he hath belief, the world
Will catch the flame, and give him credence too.
He must be kept in that vague, shadowing mist
Which is a fruitful mother of great deeds,
While we see clear, and act in certainty.
He lends the name — the inspiration; we
Must bear the brain, the shaping thought, for him;
And when, by art and craft, we have ensured
The needful levies, let him still dream on,
And think they dropped, to aid him, from the clouds.

ODOWALSKY. Give thy commands: I live but for
thy service.

Think'st thou this Muscovite or his affairs
Concern my thoughts? 'Tis thou, thou and thy glory,
For which I will adventure life and all.

For me no fortune blossoms ; friendless, landless,
 I dare not let my hopes aspire to thee.
 Thy grace I may not win, but I'll deserve it.
 To make thee great be my one only aim ;
 Then, though another should possess thee, still
 Thou wilt be mine — being what I have made thee.

MARINA. Therefore my whole heart do I pledge
 to thee ;

To thee I trust the acting of my thoughts.
 The king doth mean us false. I read him through.
 'Twas a concerted farce with Sapieha,
 A juggle, all ! 'Twould please him well, belike,
 To see my father's power, which he dreads deeply,
 Enfeebled in this enterprise — the league
 Of the noblesse, which shook his heart with fear,
 Drawn off in this campaign on foreign bounds,
 While he himself sits neutral in the fray.
 He thinks to share our fortune, if we win ;
 And if we lose, he hopes with greater ease
 To fix on us the bondage of his yoke.
 We stand alone. This die is cast. If he
 Cares for himself, we shall be selfish too.
 You lead the troops to Kioff. There let them swear
 Allegiance to the prince, and unto me ; —
 Mark you, to me ! 'Tis needful for our ends.
 I want your eye, and not your arm alone.

ODOWALSKY. Command me — speak —

MARINA. You lead the Czarowitch.
 Keep your eye on him ; stir not from his side,
 Render me 'count of every step he makes.

ODOWALSKY. Rely on me, he'll never cast us
 off.

MARINA. No man is grateful. Once his throne is
 sure,
 He'll not be slow to cast our bonds aside.
 The Russian hates the Pole — must hate him ever ;
 No bond of amity can link their hearts.

Enter OPALINSKY, BIELSKY, and several Polish noblemen.

OPALINSKY. Fair patron, get us gold, and we march
with you,
This lengthened Diet has consumed our all.
Let us have gold, we'll make thee Russia's queen.

MARINA. The Bishop of Kamienieck and Culm
Lends money on the pawn of land and serfs.
Sell, barter, pledge the hamlets of your boors,
Turn all to silver, horses, means of war!
War is the best of chapmen. He transmutes
Iron into gold. Whate'er you now may lose
You'll find in Moscow twenty-fold again.

BIELSKY. Two hundred more wait in the tavern
yonder;
If you will show yourself, and drain a cup
With them, they're yours, all yours — I know them well.
MARINA. Expect me! You shall introduce me to
them.

OPALINSKY. 'Tis plain that you were born to be a
queen.

MARINA. I was, and therefore I must be a queen.

BIELSKY. Ay, mount the snow-white steed, thine
armour on,
And so, a second Vanda, lead thy troops,
Inspired by thee, to certain victory.

MARINA. My spirit leads you. War is not for
women.

The rendezvous is in Kioff. Thither my father
Will lead a levy of three thousand horse.
My sister's husband gives two thousand more,
And the Don sends a Cossack host in aid.
Do you all swear you will be true to me?

ALL. All, all — we swear! [*Draw their swords.*
Vivat Marina, Russiæ Regina!

[MARINA *tears her veil in pieces, and divides it
among them.* *Exeunt omnes but MARINA.*

Enter MEISCHEK.

MARINA. Wherefore so sad, when fortune smiles
on us,
When every step thrives to our utmost wish,
And all around are arming in our cause?

MEISCHEK. 'Tis even because of this, my child!
All, all

Is staked upon the cast. Thy father's means
Are in these warlike preparations swamped.
I have much cause to ponder seriously;
Fortune is false, uncertain the result.
Mad, venturous girl, what hast thou brought me to?
What a weak father have I been, that I
Did not withstand thy importunities!
I am the richest Waywode of the empire,
The next in honour to the king. Had we
But been content to be so, and enjoyed
Our stately fortunes with a tranquil soul!
Thy hopes soared higher — not for thee sufficed
The moderate station which thy sisters won.
Thou wouldst attain the loftiest mark that can
By mortals be achieved, and wear a crown.
I, thy fond, foolish father, longed to heap
On thee, my darling one, all glorious gains,
So by thy prayers I let myself be fooled,
And peril my sure fortunes on a chance.

MARINA. How? My dear father, dost thou rue
thy goodness?

Who with the meaner prize can live content,
When o'er his head the noblest courts his grasp?

MEISCHEK. Thy sisters wear no crowns, yet they
are happy.

MARINA. What happiness is that to leave the home
Of the Waywode, my father, for the house
Of some count palatine, a grateful bride?
What do I gain of new from such a change?

And can I joy in looking to the morrow
When it brings naught but what was stale to-day ?
Oh, tasteless round of petty, worn pursuits !
Oh, wearisome monotony of life !
Are they a guerdon for high hopes, high aims ?
Or love or greatness I must have : all else
Are unto me alike indifferent.
Smooth off the trouble from thy brow, dear father !
Let's trust the stream that bears us on its breast,
Think not upon the sacrifice thou makest,
Think on the prize, the goal that's to be won —
When thou shalt see thy daughter robed in state,
In regal state, aloft on Moscow's throne,
And thy son's sons the rulers of the world !

MEISCHEK. I think of naught, see naught, but thee,
my child, .

Girt with the splendours of the imperial crown.
Thou'rt bent to have it ; I cannot gainsay thee.

MARINA. Yet one request, my dearest, best of
fathers,

I pray you grant me !

MEISCHEK. Name thy wish, my child.

MARINA. Shall I remain shut up at Sambor with
The fires of boundless longing in my breast ?
Beyond the Dnieper will my die be cast,
While boundless space divides me from the spot ;
Can I endure it ? Oh, the impatient spirit
Will lie upon the rack of expectation
And measure out this monstrous length of space
With groans and anxious throbbings of the heart.

MEISCHEK. What dost thou wish ? What is it
thou wouldst have ?

MARINA. Let me abide the issue in Kioff !
There I can gather tidings at their source.
There on the frontier of both kingdoms —

MEISCHEK. Thy spirit's over-bold. Restrain it,
child !

MARINA. Yes, thou dost yield, — thou'lt take me
with thee, then ?

MEISCHEK. Thou rulest me. Must I not do thy
will ?

MARINA. My own dear father, when I am Moscow's
queen,

Kioff, you know, must be our boundary.

Kioff must then be mine, and thou shalt rule it.

MEISCHEK. Thou dreamest, girl! Already the
great Moscow

Is for thy soul too narrow ; thou, to grasp
Domains, wilt strip them from thy native land.

MARINA. Kioff belonged not to our native land ;

There the Varegers ruled in days of yore.

I have the ancient chronicles by heart ;

'Twas from the Russian empire wrenched by force.

I will restore it to its former crown.

MEISCHEK. Hush, hush ! The Waywode must not
hear such talk. [Trumpet without.

They're breaking up.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Greek convent in a bleak district near the sea Belozero.

*A train of nuns, in black robes and veils, passes
over the back of the stage. MARFA, in a white veil,
stands apart from the others, leaning on a tomb-
stone. OLGA steps out from the train, remains
gazing at her for a time, and then advances to her.*

OLGA. And does thy heart not urge thee forth with
us

To taste reviving nature's opening sweets ?

The glad sun comes, the long, long night retires,

The ice melts in the streams, and soon the sledge
Will to the boat give place and summer swallow.
The world awakes once more, and the new joy
Woos all to leave their narrow cloister cells
For the bright air and freshening breath of spring.
And wilt thou only, sunk in lasting grief,
Refuse to share the general exultation ?

MARFA. On with the rest, and leave me to myself !
Let those rejoice who still have power to hope.
The time that puts fresh youth in all the world
Brings naught to me ; to me the past is all,
My hopes, my joys, are with the things that were.

OLGA. Dost thou still mourn thy son — still, still
lament

The sovereignty which thou hast lost ? Does time,
Which pours a balm on every wounded heart,
Lose all its potency with thee alone ?
Thou wert the empress of this mighty realm,
The mother of a blooming son. He was
Snatched from thee by a dreadful destiny ;
Into this dreary convent wert thou thrust,
Here on the verge of habitable earth.
Full sixteen times since that disastrous day
The face of nature hath renewed its youth ;
Still have I seen no change come over thine,
That looked a grave amid a blooming world.
Thou'rt like some moonless image, carved in stone
By sculptor's chisel, that doth ever keep
The selfsame fixed unalterable mien.

MARFA. Yes, time, fell time, hath signed and set
me up

As a memorial of my dreadful fate.
I will not be at peace, will not forget.
That soul must be of poor and shallow stamp
Which takes a cure from time — a recompense
For what can never be compensated !
Nothing shall buy my sorrow from me. No,

As heaven's vault still goes with the wanderer,
 Girds and environs him with boundless grasp,
 Turn where he will, by sea or land, so goes
 My anguish with me, wheresoe'er I turn;
 It hems me round, like an unbounded sea;
 My ceaseless tears have failed to drain its depths.

OLGA. Oh, see! what news can yonder boy have
 brought,

The sisters round him throng so eagerly?
 He comes from distant shores, where homes abound,
 And brings us tidings from the land of men.
 The sea is clear, the highways free once more.
 Art thou not curious to learn his news?
 Though to the world we are as good as dead,
 Yet of its changes willingly we hear,
 And, safe upon the shore, with wonder mark
 The roar and ferment of the trampling waves.

[NUNS come down the stage with a FISHER BOY.

XENIA — HELENA. Speak, speak, and tell us all the
 news you bring.

ALEXIA. Relate what's passing in the world beyond.

FISHER BOY. Good, pious ladies, give me time to
 speak!

XENIA. Is't war — or peace?

ALEXIA. Who's now upon the throne?

FISHER BOY. A ship is to Archangel just come in
 From the north pole, where everything is ice.

OLGA. How came a vessel into that wild sea?

FISHER BOY. It is an English merchantman, and it
 Has found a new way out to get to us.

ALEXIA. What will not man adventure for his
 gain?

XENIA. And so the world is nowhere to be barred!

FISHER BOY. But that's the very smallest of the
 news.

'Tis something very different moves the world.

ALEXIA. Oh, speak and tell us!

OLGA. Say, what has occurred ?

FISHER BOY. We live to hear strange marvels nowadays :

The dead rise up, and come to life again.

OLGA. Explain yourself.

FISHER BOY. Prince Dmitri, Ivan's son,
Whom we have mourned for dead these sixteen
years,

Is now alive, and has appeared in Poland.

OLGA. The prince alive ?

MARFA. (*starting*) My son !

OLGA. Compose thyself !
Calm down thy heart till we have learned the whole.

ALEXIA. How can this possibly be so, when he
Was killed, and perished in the flames at Uglitsch ?

FISHER BOY. He managed somehow to escape the
fire,

And found protection in a monastery.

There he grew up in secrecy, until

His time was come to publish who he was.

OLGA. (*to MARFA*) You tremble, princess ! You
grow pale !

MARFA. I know

That it must be delusion, yet so little

Is my heart steeled 'gainst fear and hope e'en now,

That in my breast it flutters like a bird.

OLGA. Why should it be delusion ? Mark his
words !

How could this rumour spread without good cause ?

FISHER BOY. Without good cause ? The Lithua-
nians

And Poles are all in arms upon his side.

The Czar himself quakes in his capital.

[*MARFA is compelled by her emotion to lean upon*
OLGA and ALEXIA.

XENIA. Speak on, speak, tell us everything you
know.

ALEXIA. And tell us, too, of whom you stole the news.

FISHER BOY. I stole the news? A letter has gone forth

To every town and province from the Czar.

This letter the Posadmik of our town

Read to us all, in open market-place.

It bore, that busy schemers were abroad,

And that we should not lend their tales belief.

But this made us believe them; for, had they

Been false, the Czar would have despised the lie.

MARFA. Is this the calm I thought I had achieved?

And clings my heart so close to temporal things,

That a mere word can shake my inward soul?

For sixteen years have I bewailed my son,

And yet at once believe that still he lives.

OLGA. Sixteen long years thou'st mourned for him
as dead,

And yet his ashes thou hast never seen!

Naught countervails the truth of the report.

Nay, does not Providence watch o'er the fate

Of kings and monarchies? Then welcome hope:

More things befall than thou canst comprehend,

Who can set limits to the Almighty's power?

MARFA. Shall I turn back to look again on
life,

To which long since I spoke a sad farewell?

It was not with the dead my hopes abode.

Oh, say no more of this. Let not my heart

Hang on this phantom hope! Let me not lose

My darling son a second time. Alas!

My peace of mind is gone, — my dream of peace.

I cannot trust these tidings, — yet, alas,

I can no longer dash them from my soul!

Woe's me, I never lost my son till now.

Oh, now I can no longer tell if I

Shall seek him 'mongst the living or the dead,

Tossed on the rock of never-ending doubt.

[*A bell sounds, — the sister PORTERESS enters.*

OLGA. Why has the bell been sounded, sister, say?

PORTERESS. The lord archbishop waits without; he brings

A message from the Czar, and craves an audience.

OLGA. Does the archbishop stand within our gates? What strange occurrence can have brought him here?

XENIA. Come all, and give him greeting as befits.

[*They advance toward the gate as the ARCHBISHOP enters; they all kneel before him, and he makes the sign of the Greek cross over them.*

IOB. The kiss of peace I bring you in the name
Of Father, Son, and of the Holy Ghost,
Proceeding from the Father!

OLGA. Sir, we kiss
In humblest reverence thy paternal hand!
Command thy daughters!

IOB. My mission is addressed to Sister Marfa.

OLGA. See, here she stands, and waits to know thy will.
[*All the NUNS withdraw.*

IOB. It is the mighty prince who sends me here;
Upon his distant throne he thinks of thee;
For as the sun, with his great eye of flame,
Sheds light and plenty all abroad the world,
So sweeps the sovereign's eye on every side;
Even to the farthest limits of his realm
His care is wakeful and his glance is keen.

MARFA. How far his arm can strike I know too well.

IOB. He knows the lofty spirit fills thy soul,
And therefore feels indignantly the wrong
A bold-faced villain dares to offer thee.
Learn, then, in Poland, an audacious churl,
A renegade, who broke his monkish vows,
Laid down his habit, and renounced his God,
Doth use the name and title of thy son,

Whom death snatched from thee in his infancy.
 The shameless varlet boasts him of thy blood,
 And doth affect to be Czar Ivan's son ;
 A Waywode breaks the peace ; from Poland leads
 This spurious monarch, whom himself created,
 Across our frontiers, with an armed power :
 So he beguiles the Russians' faithful hearts,
 And lures them on to treason and revolt.

The Czar,

With pure, paternal feeling, sends me to thee.
 Thou hold'st the manes of thy son in honour ;
 Nor wilt permit a bold adventurer
 To steal his name and title from the tomb,
 And with audacious hand usurp his rights.
 Thou wilt proclaim aloud to all the world
 That thou dost own him for no son of thine.
 Thou wilt not nurse a bastard's alien blood
 Upon thy heart, that beats so nobly ; never !
 Thou wilt — and this the Czar expects from thee —
 Give the vile counterfeit the lie, with all
 The righteous indignation it deserves.

MARFA. *(who has during the last speech subdued the
 most violent emotion)*

What do I hear, archbishop ? Can it be ?
 Oh, tell me, by what signs and marks of proof
 This bold-faced trickster doth uphold himself
 As Ivan's son, whom we bewailed as dead ?

IOB. By some faint, shadowy likeness to the
 Czar,
 By documents which chance threw in his way,
 And by a precious trinket, which he shows,
 He cheats the credulous and wondering mob.

MARFA. What is the trinket ? Oh, pray, tell me
 what ?

IOB. A golden cross, gemmed with nine emeralds,
 Which Ivan Westislowsky, so he says,
 Hung round his neck at the baptismal font.

MARFA. What do you say? He shows this trinket,
this? [*With forced composure.*]

And how does he allege he came by it?

IOB. A faithful servant and Diak, he says,
Preserved him from the assassins and the flames,
And bore him to Smolenskow privily.

MARFA. But where was he brought up? Where,
gives he forth,
Was he concealed and fostered until now?

IOB. In Tschudow's monastery he was reared,
Unknowing who he was; from thence he fled
To Lithuania and Poland, where
He served the Prince of Sendomir, until
An accident revealed his origin.

MARFA. With such a tale as this can he find
friends
To peril life and fortune in his cause?

IOB. Oh, madam, false, false-hearted is the
Pole,
And enviously he eyes our country's wealth.
He welcomes every pretext that may serve
To light the flames of war within our bounds!

MARFA. And were there credulous spirits, even in
Moscow,
Could by this juggle be so lightly stirred?

IOB. Oh, fickle, princess, is the people's heart!
They dote on alteration, and expect
To reap advantage from a change of rulers.
The bold assurance of the falsehood charms;
The marvellous finds favour and belief.
Therefore the Czar is anxious thou shouldst quell
This mad delusion, as thou only canst.
A word from thee annihilates the traitor
That falsely claims the title of thy son.
It joys me thus to see thee moved. I see
The audacious juggle rouses all thy pride,
And with a noble anger paints thy cheek.

MARFA. And where, where, tell me, does he tarry now,

Who dares usurp the title of my son ?

IOB. E'en now he's moving on to Tscherinsko ;
His camp at Kioff has broke up, 'tis rumoured ;
And with a force of mounted Polish troops
And Don Cossacks, he comes to push his claims.

MARFA. Oh, God Almighty, thanks, thanks, thanks,
that thou

Hast sent me rescue and revenge at last !

IOB. How, Marfa, how am I to construe this ?

MARFA. Oh, heavenly powers, conduct him safely
here !

Hover, oh, all ye angels, round his banners !

IOB. Can it be so ? The traitor, canst thou trust —

MARFA. He is my son. Yes ! by these signs alone
I recognise him. By thy Czar's alarm

I recognise him. Yes ! He lives ! He comes !

Down, tyrant, from thy throne, and shake with fear !

There still doth live a shoot from Rurik's stem ;

The genuine Czar — the rightful heir draws nigh,

He comes to claim a reckoning for his own.

IOB. Dost thou bethink thee what thou say'st ?
'Tis madness !

MARFA. At length — at length has dawned the
day of vengeance, —

Of restoration. Innocence is dragged

To light by Heaven from the grave's midnight gloom.

The haughty Godunow, my deadly foe,

Must crouch and sue for mercy at my feet ;

Oh, now my burning wishes are fulfilled !

IOB. Can hate and rancorous malice blind you so ?

MARFA. Can terror blind your monarch so, that he
Should hope deliverance from me — from me —

Whom he hath done immeasurable wrong ?

I shall, forsooth, deny the son whom Heaven

Restores me by a miracle from the grave,

And to please him, the butcher of my house,
Who piled upon me woes unspeakable?
Yes, thrust from me the succour God has sent
In the sad evening of my heavy anguish?
No, thou escap'st me not. No, thou shalt hear me,
I have thee fast, I will not let thee free.
Oh, I can ease my bosom's load at last!
At last launch forth against mine enemy
The long-pent anger of my inmost soul!

Who was it, who,
That shut me up within this living tomb,
In all the strength and freshness of my youth,
With all its feelings glowing in my breast?
Who from my bosom rent my darling son,
And chartered ruffian hands to take his life?
Oh, words can never tell what I have suffered,
When, with a yearning that would not be still,
I watched throughout the long, long starry nights,
And noted with my tears the hours elapse!
The day of succour comes, and of revenge;
I see the mighty glorying in his might.

IOB. You think the Czar will dread you — you
mistake.

MARFA. He's in my power — one little word from
me,

One only, sets the seal upon his fate!
It was for this thy master sent thee here!
The eyes of Russia and of Poland now
Are closely bent upon me. If I own
The Czarowitch as Ivan's son and mine,
Then all will do him homage; his the throne.
If I disown him, then he is undone;
For who will credit that his rightful mother,
A mother wronged, so foully wronged as I,
Could from her heart repulse its darling child,
To league with the despoilers of her house?
I need but speak one word and all the world

Deserts him as a traitor. Is't not so ?
This word you wish from me. That mighty service,
Confess, I can perform for Godunow !

IOB. Thou wouldst perform it for thy country, and
Avert the dread calamities of war,
Shouldst thou do homage to the truth. Thyself,
Ay, thou hast ne'er a doubt thy son is dead ;
And couldst thou testify against thy conscience ?

MARFA. These sixteen years I've mourned his death ;
but yet

I ne'er have seen his ashes. I believed
His death, there trusting to the general voice
And my sad heart — I now believe he lives,
Trusting the general voice and my strong hope.
'Twere impious, with audacious doubts, to seek
To set a bound to the Almighty's will ;
And even were he not my heart's dear son,
Yet should he be the son of my revenge.
In my child's room I take him to my breast,
Whom Heaven has sent me to avenge my wrongs.

IOB. Unhappy one, dost thou defy the strong ?
From his far-reaching arm thou art not safe
Even in the convent's distant solitude.

MARFA. Kill me he may, and stifle in the grave,
Or dungeon's gloom, my woman's voice, that it
Shall not reverberate throughout the world.
This he may do ; but force me to speak aught
Against my will, that can he not ; though backed
By all thy craft — no, he has missed his aim !

IOB. Is this thy final purpose ? Ponder well !
Hast thou no gentler message for the Czar ?

MARFA. Tell him to hope for heaven, if so he dare,
And for his people's love, if so he can.

IOB. Enough ! thou art bent on thy destruction.
Thou lean'st upon a reed, will break beneath thee ;
One common ruin will o'erwhelm ye both. [*Exit.*]

MARFA. It is my son, I cannot doubt 'tis he.

Even the wild hordes of the uncultured wastes
Take arms upon his side ; the haughty Pole,
The Palatine, doth stake his noble daughter
On the pure gold of his most righteous cause,
And I alone reject him — I, his mother ?
I, only I, shook not beneath the storm
Of joy that lifts all hearts with dizzying whirl,
And scatters turmoil widely o'er the earth.
He is my son — I must, will trust in him,
And grasp with living confidence the hand
Which Heaven hath sent for my deliverance.
'Tis he, he comes with his embattled hosts,
To set me free, and to avenge my shame !
Hark to his drums, his martial trumpets' clang !
Ye nations come — come from the east and south.
Forth from your steppes, your immemorial woods !
Of every tongue, of every raiment come !
Bridle the steed, the reindeer, and the camel !
Sweep hither, countless as the ocean waves,
And throng around the banners of your king !
Oh, wherefore am I mewed and fettered here,
A prisoned soul with longings infinite !
Thou deathless sun, that circlest earth's huge ball,
Be thou the messenger of my desires !
Thou all-pervading, chainless breeze that sweep'st
With lightning speed to earth's remotest bound,
Oh, bear to him the yearnings of my heart.
My prayers are all I have to give ; but these
I pour all glowing from my inmost soul,
And send them up to heaven on wings of flame,
Like armed hosts, I send them forth to hail him.

SCENE II.

A height crowned with trees. A wide and smiling landscape occupies the background, which is traversed by a beautiful river, and enlivened by the budding green of spring. At various points the towers of several towns are visible. Drums and martial music without. Enter ODOWALSKY, and other officers, and immediately afterward DEMETRIUS.

ODOWALSKY. Go, lead the army down by the wood,
Whilst we look round us here upon the height.

[Exeunt some of the officers.]

Enter DEMETRIUS.

DEMETRIUS. *(starting back)* Ha ! what a prospect !

ODOWALSKY. Sire, thou see'st thy kingdom
Spread out before thee. That is Russian land.

RAZIN. Why, e'en this pillar here bears Moscow's
arms ;
Here terminates the empire of the Poles.

DEMETRIUS. Is that the Dnieper, rolls its quiet
stream
Along these meadows ?

ODOWALSKY. That, Sire, is the Desna ;
See, yonder rise the towers of Tschernizow !

RAZIN. Yon gleam you see upon the fair horizon
Is from the roofs of Sewerisch Novgorod.

DEMETRIUS. What a rich prospect ! What fair
meadow lands !

ODOWALSKY. The spring has decked them with her
trim array ;
A teeming harvest clothes the fruitful soil.

DEMETRIUS. The view is lost in limitless expanse.

RAZIN. Yet is this but a small beginning, Sire,

Of Russia's mighty empire. For it spreads
Toward the east to confines unexplored,
And on the north has ne'er a boundary,
Save the productive energy of earth.
Behold, our Czar is quite absorbed in thought.

DEMETRIUS. On these fair meads dwell peace, un-
broken peace,
And with war's terrible array I come
To scatter havoc, like a listed foe!

ODOWALSKY. Hereafter 'twill be time to think of
that.

DEMETRIUS. Thou feelest as a Pole, I am Moscow's
son.

It is the land to which I owe my life;
Forgive me, thou dear soil, land of my home,
Thou sacred boundary-pillar, which I clasp,
Whereon my sire his broad-spread eagle graved,
That I, thy son, with foreign foemen's arms,
Invade the tranquil temple of thy peace.
'Tis to reclaim my heritage I come,
And the proud name that has been stolen from me.
Here the Varegers, my forefathers, ruled,
In lengthened line, for thirty generations;
I am the last of all their lineage, snatched
From murder by God's special providence.

SCENE III.

*A Russian village. An open square before a church.
The tocsin is heard. GLEB, ILIA, and TIMOSKA
rush in, armed with hatchets.*

GLEB. (*entering from a house*) Why are they run-
ning?

ILIA. (*entering from another house*) Who has tolled
the bell?

TIMOSKA. Neighbours, come forth! Come all, to council come!

[*Enter OLEG and IZOR, with many other peasants, women and children, who carry bundles.*

GLEB. Whence come ye hither with your wives and children?

IZOR. Fly, fly! The Pole has fallen upon the land At Maromesk, and slaughters all he finds.

OLEG. Fly into the interior — to strong towns! We've fired our cottages, there's not a soul Left in the village, and we're making now Up country for the army of the Czar.

TIMOSKA. Here comes another troop of fugitives.

[*IWANSKA and PETRUSCHKA, with armed peasantry, enter on different sides.*

IWANSKA. Long live the Czar! The mighty prince Dmitri!

GLEB. How! What is this!

ILIA. What do you mean?

TIMOSKA. Who are you?

PETRUSCHKA. Join all who're loyal to our princely line!

TIMOSKA. What means all this? There a whole village flies

Up country to escape the Poles, while you Make for the very point whence these have fled, To join the standard of the country's foe!

PETRUSCHKA. What foe? It is no foe that comes; it is

The people's friend, the emperor's rightful heir.

The POSADMIK (the village judge) enters to read a manifesto by Demetrius. Vacillation of the inhabitants of the village between the two parties. The peasant women are the first to be won over to Demetrius, and turn the scale.

Camp of DEMETRIUS. He is worsted in the first action, but the army of the Czar Boris conquers in a manner against its will, and does not follow up its advantages. Demetrius, in despair, is about to destroy himself, and is with difficulty prevented from doing so by Korela and Odowalsky. Overbearing demeanour of the Cossacks even to Demetrius.

Camp of the army of CZAR BORIS. He is absent himself, and this injures his cause, as he is feared but not loved. His army is strong, but not to be relied on. The leaders are not unanimous, and partly incline to the side of Demetrius from a variety of motives. One of their number, Soltikow, declares for him from conviction. His adherence is attended with the most important results; a large portion of the army deserts to Demetrius.

BORIS in Moscow. He still maintains his position as absolute ruler, and has faithful servants around him; but already he is discomposed by evil tidings. He is withheld from joining the army by apprehension of a rebellion in Moscow. He is also ashamed as Czar to enter the field in person against a traitor. Scene between him and the archbishop.

Bad news pours in from all sides, and Boris's danger grows momentarily more imminent. He hears of the revolt of the peasantry and the provincial towns, — of the inactivity and mutiny of the army, — of the commotions in Moscow, — of the advance of Demetrius. Romanow, whom he has deeply wronged, arrives in Moscow. This gives rise to new apprehensions. Now come the tidings that the Boiars are flying to the camp of Demetrius, and that the whole army has gone over to him.

BORIS and AXINIA. The Czar appears in a touching aspect as father, and in the dialogue with his daughter unfolds his inmost nature.

BORIS has made his way to the throne by crime, but undertaken and fulfilled all the duties of a monarch; to the country he is a valuable prince and a true father of his people. It is only in his personal dealings with individuals that he is cunning, revengeful, and cruel. His spirit as well as his rank elevates him above all that surround him. The long possession of supreme power, the habit of ruling over men, and the despotic form of government, have so nursed his pride that it is impossible for him to outlive his greatness. He sees clearly what awaits him; but still he is Czar, and not degraded, though he resolves to die.

He believes in forewarnings, and in his present mood things appear to him of significance which, on other occasions, he had despised. A particular circumstance, in which he seems to hear the voice of destiny, decides him.

Shortly before his death his nature changes; he grows milder, even toward the messengers of evil, and is ashamed of the bursts of rage with which he had received them before. He permits the worst to be told to him, and even rewards the narrator.

So soon as he learns the misfortune that seals his fate, he leaves the stage without further explanation, with composure and resignation. Shortly afterward he returns in the habit of a monk, and removes his daughter from the sight of his last moments. She is to seek protection from insult in a cloister; his son, Feodor, as a child, will perhaps have less to fear. He takes poison, and enters a retired chamber to die in peace.

General confusion at the tidings of the Czar's death. The Boiars form an imperial council and rule in the Kremlin. Romanow (afterward Czar, and founder of the now ruling house) enters at the head of an armed force, swears, on the bosom of the Czar, an oath of allegiance to his son Feodor, and compels the Boiars to follow his example. Revenge and ambition are far from his soul; he pursues only justice. He loves Axinia without hope, and is, without knowing it, beloved by her in return.

ROMANOW hastens to the army to secure it for the young Czar. Insurrection in Moscow, brought about by the adherents of Demetrius. The people drag the Boiars from their houses, make themselves masters of Feodor and Axinia — put them in prison, and send delegates to Demetrius.

DEMETRIUS in Tula, at the pinnacle of success. The army is his own; the keys of numerous towns are brought to him. Moscow alone appears to offer resistance. He is mild and amiable, testifies a noble emotion at the intelligence of the death of Boris, pardons a detected conspiracy against his life, despises the servile adulations of the Russians, and is for sending them away. The Poles, on the other hand, by whom he is surrounded, are rude and violent, and treat the Russians with contempt. Demetrius longs for a meeting with his mother, and sends a messenger to Marina.

Among the multitude of Russians who throng around Demetrius in Tula appears a man whom he at once recognises; he is greatly delighted to see him. He bids all the rest withdraw, and so soon as he is alone with this man he thanks him, with full heart, as his preserver and benefactor. This person hints that Demetrius is under especial obligations to him, and to a

greater extent than he is himself aware. Demetrius urges him to explain, and the assassin of the genuine Demetrius thereupon discloses the real facts of the case. For this murder he had received no recompense, but on the contrary had nothing but death to anticipate from Boris. Thirsting for revenge, he stumbled upon a boy whose resemblance to the Czar Ivan struck him. This circumstance must be turned to account. He seized the boy, fled with him from Uglitsch, brought him to a monk, whom he succeeded in gaining over for his ends, and delivered to him the trinkets which he had himself taken from the murdered Demetrius. By means of this boy, whom he had never lost sight of, and whose steps he had attended upon all occasions without being observed, he is now revenged. His tool, the false Demetrius, rules over Russia in Boris's room.

During this narration a mighty change comes over Demetrius. His silence is awful. In the moment of the highest rage and despair, the assassin drives him to the extreme of endurance, when with a defying and insolent air he demands his reward. Demetrius strikes him to the earth.

Soliloquy of Demetrius. Internal conflict; but the feeling of the necessity for maintaining his position as Czar is triumphant.

The delegates from Moscow arrive, and submit themselves to Demetrius. They are received gloomily, and with a menacing demeanour. Among them is the Patriarch. Demetrius deposes him from his dignity, and soon afterward sentences to death a Russian of rank, who had questioned the authenticity of his birth.

MARFA and OLGA await Demetrius under a magnificent tent. Marfa speaks of the approaching interview with more doubt and fear than hope, and trembles as the moment draws near which should assure her highest happiness. Olga speaks to her, herself without faith. During the long journey they have both had time to recall the whole circumstances; the first exultation had given place to reflection. The gloomy silence and the repulsive glances of the guards who surround the tent serve still further to augment their despondency.

The trumpets sound. Marfa is irresolute whether she shall advance to meet Demetrius. Now he stands before her alone. The little that was left of hope in her heart altogether vanishes on seeing him. An unknown something steps between them — nature does not speak — they are separated for ever. The first impulse is an endeavour to approach; Marfa is the first to make a movement to recede. Demetrius observes it, and remains for a moment paralysed. Significant silence.

DEMETRIUS. Does thy heart say nothing? Dost thou not recognise thy blood in me?

MARFA is silent.

DEMETRIUS. The voice of nature is holy and free; I will neither constrain nor belie it. Had thy heart spoken at the first glance then had mine answered it; thou shouldst have found a pious, loving son in me. The claim of duty would have concurred with inclination and heartfelt affection. But if thou dost not feel as a mother for me, then, think as a princess, command thyself as a queen! Fate unexpectedly gave me to thee as a son; accept me as a gift of Heaven. Though even I were not thy son, which I now appear to be, still I rob thy son of nothing. I stripped it from thy foe. Thee and thy blood have I avenged; I have de-

livered thee from the grave in which thou wert entombed alive, and led thee back into the royal seat. That thy destiny is linked with mine thou knowest. With me thou standest, and with me must fall. All the people's eyes are upon us. I hate deception, and what I do not feel I may not show; but I do really feel a reverence for thee, and this feeling, which bends my knee before thee, comes from my heart.

[Dumb show of MARFA, to indicate her internal emotion.]

DEMETRIUS. Make thy resolve! Let that which nature will not prompt be the free act of thy will! I ask no hypocrisy — no falsehood, from thee; I ask genuine feelings. Do not seem to be my mother, but be so. Throw the past from thee — grasp the present with thy whole heart! If I am not thy son yet I am the Czar — I have power and success upon my side. He who lies in his grave is dust; he has no heart to love thee, no eye to smile upon thee. Turn to the living.

[MARFA bursts into tears.]

DEMETRIUS. Oh, these golden drops are welcome to me. Let them flow! Show thyself thus to the people!

[At a signal from DEMETRIUS the tent is thrown open, and the assembled Russians become spectators of this scene.]

Entrance of Demetrius into Moscow. Great splendour, but of a military kind. Poles and Cossacks compose the procession. Gloom and terror mingle with the demonstrations of joy. Distrust and misfortune surround the whole.

ROMANOW, who came to the army too late, has returned to Moscow to protect Feodor and Axinia. It is all in vain; he is himself thrown into prison. Axinia flies to Marfa, and at her feet implores protection against the Poles. Here Demetrius sees her, and

a violent and irresistible passion is kindled in his breast. Axinia detests him.

DEMETRIUS as Czar. A fearful element sustains him, but he does not control it: he is urged on by the force of strange passions. His inward consciousness betokens a general distrust; he has no friend on whom he can rely. Poles and Cossacks, by their insolent licentiousness, injure him in the popular opinion. Even that which is creditable to him — his popular manners, simplicity, and contempt of stiff ceremonial, occasions dissatisfaction. Occasionally he offends, through inadvertency, the usages of the country. He persecutes the monks because he suffered severely under them. Moreover, he is not exempt from despotic caprices in the moments of offended pride. Odowalsky knows how to make himself at all times indispensable to him, removes the Russians to a distance, and maintains his overruling influence.

DEMETRIUS meditates inconstancy to Marina. He confers upon the point with the Archbishop Iob, who, in order to get rid of the Poles, falls in with his desire, and puts before him an exalted picture of the imperial power.

MARINA appears with a vast retinue in Moscow. Meeting with Demetrius. Hollow and cold meeting on both sides; she, however, wears her disguise with greater skill. She urges an immediate marriage. Preparations are made for a magnificent festival.

By the orders of Marina a cup of poison is brought to Axinia. Death is welcome to her; she was afraid of being forced to the altar with the Czar.

Violent grief of Demetrius. With a broken heart he goes to the betrothal with Marina.

After the marriage Marina discloses to him that she does not consider him to be the true Demetrius, and never did. She then coldly leaves him in a state of extreme anguish and dismay.

Meanwhile SCHINSKOI, one of the former generals of the Czar BORIS, avails himself of the growing discontent of the people, and becomes the head of a conspiracy against Demetrius.

ROMANOW, in prison, is comforted by a supernatural apparition. Axinia's spirit stands before him, opens to him a prospect of happier times in store, and enjoins him calmly to allow destiny to ripen, and not to stain himself with blood. ROMANOW receives a hint that he may himself be called to the throne. Soon afterward he is solicited to take part in the conspiracy, but declines.

SOLTIKOW reproaches himself bitterly for having betrayed his country to Demetrius. But he will not be a second time a traitor, and adheres, from principle and against his feelings, to the party which he has once adopted. As the misfortune has happened, he seeks at least to alleviate it, and to enfeeble the power of the Poles. He pays for this effort with his life; but he accepts death as a merited punishment, and confesses this when dying to Demetrius himself.

CASIMIR, a brother of LODOISKA, a young Polish lady, who has been secretly and hopelessly attached to Demetrius, in the house of the Waywode of Sendomir, has, at his sister's request, accompanied Demetrius in the campaign, and in every encounter defended him bravely. In the moment of danger, when all the other

retainers of Demetrius think only of their personal safety, Casimir alone remains faithful to him, and sacrifices life in his defence.

The conspiracy breaks out. Demetrius is with Marfa when the leading conspirators force their way into the room. The dignity and courage of Demetrius have a momentary effect upon the rebels. He nearly succeeds in disarming them by a promise to place the Poles at their disposal. But at this point SCHINSKOI rushes in with an infuriated band. An explicit declaration is demanded from the ex-empress; she is required to swear, upon the cross, that Demetrius is her son. To testify against her conscience in a manner so solemn is impossible. She turns from Demetrius in silence, and is about to withdraw. "Is she silent?" exclaims the tumultuous throng. "Does she disown him?" "Then, traitor, die!" and Demetrius falls, pierced by their swords, at Marfa's feet.

THE END.

Loretto College Library

PT 2473 .A4 M37 1902 SMC
Schiller, Friedrich,
The maid of Orleans, The
bride of Messina, Wilhelm Te
Illustrated Sterling ed. --

